

The Sensual and the Moral:
“Kongzi shilun” 孔子詩論
as an Exegesis of the *Shijing* 詩經

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Declaration

I hereby declare that:

1. The work in this thesis has not been submitted previously for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree to any university or institution other than Macquarie University.
2. This thesis is an original piece of research and it has been written by me. Any help and assistance that I have received in the preparation of the thesis and all information sources and literature used have been referenced and acknowledged appropriately in the thesis.

Daniel S. K. Lee

May, 2013

Acknowledgements

I was extremely fortunate in December 2011 to secure a special appointment with the Shanghai Museum to view the bamboo manuscript “Kongzi shilun” 孔子詩論, which was not scheduled for public exhibition at that time. Ensclosed in three plaque-like acrylic boxes were the twenty-nine bamboo slips, in whose presence I was enthralled. Through the plexiglass covers of the reliquaries the soft yellow bamboo slips could be seen clearly. The patinas resulting from past human touch two thousand years ago have been displaced by the sheen radiating from a new lease of life. The Chu 楚 logographs – the arcane symbols written in black ink seemed ready to reveal the ancient wisdom that they have preserved, commanding unspeakable awe from anyone who happened to be in their presence. Thus humbled, I began to appreciate Gremio’s inarticulacy as a response to learning – “what a thing it is!”

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I’ve come to realize how profound is the scholarship of the *Odes* and that its poetic beauty is impossible to replicate. For me, imitation is not flattery but homage, and what is more appropriate than to revere the master of exegetes with something that remotely reads like an ode:

郁郁姬周	Resplendent is the literature of Zhou,
罔罔炎劉	But bemusing is Han academia.
中有君子	In between came the Master;
其學孔猷	How profound is his scholarship!
藹藹南洲	So amenable is this land down south,
藏修息游	Nurturing all facets of learning.
既淑君子	By espousing the Master’s teachings,
我心悠悠	Delight fills my heart.

D.L.

Abstract

The ‘sensual’ and the ‘moral’ are two different interpretive strategies for reading the *Shijing* 詩經 (*Book of Odes*), exemplified on the one hand by the bamboo manuscript “Kongzi shilun” 孔子詩論 (Confucian poetics) adopting the ‘sensual’ and on the other, the Han 漢 (202 BCE- 220 CE) commentarial tradition engaging in the ‘moral’. This thesis is a textual study and critical review of the manuscript alleged to be Confucius’ commentaries on the poems. As a monographic exegesis on the *Shijing* “Kongzi shilun” antedates all extant commentaries and has, so far, no parallel transmitted text. By rendering a comprehensively annotated translation and review of the manuscript, this project contributes to the current research on the topic.

The commentarial tradition of the *Shijing* since the Han, particularly the *Maoshi* 毛詩, has had profound influence over later scholarship. Although the Han erudition recognizes *qing* 情 (emotions, passions) as the motivation behind poetic creativity, it shies away from the concept by shifting to a prudish reading of the poems. In this thesis ‘the moral’ is meant to be the paradigmatic interpretation of poetry through *li* 禮 (rules of propriety) as a means used by the sage kings to instruct the people, and ‘the sensual’ is meant to be *qing*, which embraces the rich sentiments of human emotions, passions and feelings that “Kongzi shilun” reads from the odes. Between the poiesis of *qing* and the bounds of *li*, “Kongzi shilun” has now bridged the gap left by the Han scholarship regarding the notion that germinates poetry. This thesis does not seek to subvert the concept of *li* in the hermeneutics of the *Shijing*, but to claim that the Confucian precept represented by the manuscript author does not censure *qing* or the poems that celebrate it, and espouses the use of *li* as a means of transcending human desires and regulating social and spiritual relations. “Kongzi shilun” has certainly enhanced current understanding of Confucius’ didactics represented by the manuscript and inspired our appreciation of the *Shijing* embracing both the sensual and the moral aspects of the poems.

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Part A INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1 Poetry and Commentary

Gremio: O this learning, what a thing it is!

—Shakespeare
The Taming of the Shrew

If Shelley's (1792-1822) poetry is, as Browning (1812-1889) puts it, "a sublime fragmentary essay towards a presentment of the correspondency of the universe to Deity, of the natural to the spiritual, and of the actual to the ideal" (1851, 82), then Browning's commentary is as interesting as, and probably more revealing than, the subject it critiques. Placed on a high pedestal is the poetic language in which a poet's emotions (*qing* 情) are encapsulated, transposing the mundane into the sublime and lurking, as it were, behind the verses and stanzas, awaiting the pilgrimage of admirers whose commentarial endeavours are as intellectually embellished as poetry itself. Critiques on poetry may or may not be as creative as the poetry they appraise, but the volume of their literature is directly proportional to the scholarly value of the subjects they embrace, to the extent that over time, the critical becomes the critiqued, as if the plurality of their existence endorses their *raison d'être*.

Yet Browning’s observation would have no relevance to the study at hand – one of a different culture and different era – had it not been his poetic acumen which could be borrowed cross-culturally and diachronically for a broader purport. The earliest of Chinese poetry is also tinctured with notions of the universe and deity, the natural and the spiritual as well as the actual and the ideal, although their ideation and epistemic correlation may be different. As it is written in “Yu” of “Xiang Zhuan” in *The Book of Changes* 易 • 象傳 • 豫卦:

雷出地奮，豫，先王以作樂崇德，殷荐之上帝，以配祖考。

The crashing thunder stirred the earth and its creatures into joyful activities. The ancient kings, in accordance with this, composed their music and did honour to virtue, presenting it especially and most grandly to god, when they associated with him (at the service) their ancestors and fathers. (Legge 1899, 287; modified)

Within their mythical universe straddling the worlds of the living and the dead, the ancient Chinese lauded their deified ancestral rulers in poetry, songs and dances. Their poetry unabashedly depicts sensuality celebrating such desires to be ‘actual’ as much as they are natural. In their search for the spiritual and the ideal they evoked the moralistic, so much so that before long, poetry was appropriated for didactic purposes by prudish commentators taking the pedagogic centre stage. In China more than anywhere else the commentarial tradition has accreted to poetry over the years, becoming, in its own right, a genre of no less erudition, thence the birth of the *jian* 箋 (annotation), *zhuan* 傳 (elaboration), *zhu* 注 (commentary), *shu* 疏 (explication) and the like. The subject matter of the current research is the archaic manuscript written on bamboo slips and designated by archeologists as “Kongzi shilun” 孔子詩論 (“Confucian poetics” – my translation; it will be referred to as ‘the manuscript’ in this thesis unless otherwise stated),¹ which is by far the oldest commentary on the most ancient collection of Chinese poetry – the *Shijing* 詩經. Throughout history Chinese scholars have been assiduously interpreting and annotating the *Shijing*. They have never failed to quote verses from it for spicing up their rhetoric or reinforcing their arguments. Whilst the studies of the *Shijing* and its commentarial tradition are ongoing intellectual pursuits, the appearance of “Kongzi

¹ The meanings of the term “Confucianism” and all its inflections have been examined by Western scholars. The appropriateness of the epithet “Confucian” in general and as the title of the manuscript in particular will be discussed in Chapter 2.

shilun”, the text of which has hitherto not been transmitted, has exhilarated the literary fraternity by providing fresh food for thought.²

1. *Shangbo Chujian* 上博楚簡 and “Kongzi shilun” 孔子詩論

The congeries of bamboo slips, which were ‘recovered’ in Hong Kong in 1994, held promise for another bountiful haul of Warring States relics following, in less than a year, the excavation of the Guodain 郭店 tomb in Hubei 湖北; that promise was fulfilled later by way of the debut of a cache of archaic manuscripts which have become known as the *Shangbo Chujian* 上博楚簡 (the Shanghai Museum collection of Chu bamboo slips). This archaeological bonanza has overwhelmed historians, philologists and Sinologists both at home and abroad, who have been fascinated by the potential offered by the corpus for the study of pre-imperial China before the second century BCE.

The *Shangbo Chujian* was acquired from an antique dealer in Hong Kong. The corpus, comprising some 1,200 bamboo slips, caught the attention of Professor Cheung Kwong Yue 張光裕 in the spring of 1994. Copies of the bamboo texts were sent to the late chief curator of the Shanghai Museum, Professor Ma Chengyuan 馬承源 (1927-2004), whose initial assessment suggested that the corpus could possibly be Warring States (fourth to third centuries BCE) artefacts. Prior to this Professor Ma had enlisted the help of Professor Cheung to be on the outlook as he had noticed that relics illegally disinterred in China had been smuggled out of the country, most probably destined for Hong Kong. Professor Ma was quick to decide on acquiring the bamboo slips for the Shanghai Museum. A few months later in autumn, another 497 pieces of bamboo slips displaying generic similarities of calligraphy and contents to the first lot emerged on the Hong Kong market. Owing to funding problems, the Shanghai Museum was not able to acquire the second lot but the donation by the clique of enthusiasts known as the ‘Friends of the Shanghai Museum in Hong Kong’ helped to secure the supplemental corpus. Apart from this collection, the Chinese University of Hong Kong is known to possess ten bamboo slips which could be part of the *Shangbo* corpus (Zhu Yuanqing 2002, 1-4). However, the

² As will be discussed later, recently this elation has been tinged with some regret.

Shangbo Chujian so far refers to the first lot of the 1,200-odd slips only, of which twenty-nine are the primary data for this study.

Unlike the Guodian discovery, which saw the excavation of artefacts from the necropolis nine kilometers north of the city ruins of the then Chu capital – Jiangling Chu Jinan cheng 江陵楚紀南城 (Chen Wei 2009, 138) – the serendipitous recovery of the *Shangbo Chujian* from the market means that it lacks the *prima facie* authenticity of provenance. However, radiocarbon and other scientific analyses conducted by the Shanghai Museum and the Chinese Academy of Sciences (Nuclear Science & Techniques) on the bamboo slips confirmed that they are dateable to the late Warring States period. The Chinese Academy of Forestry had also identified the species of the bamboo as Moso 毛竹, botanically known as *Phyllostachys Pubescens* of the *Gramineae* family (Zhu Yuanqing 2002, 3). Although it is not possible to state categorically that Moso was grown in the Chu regions during the Warring States period, it is, at least, a species local to the region today, according to a study by the American Bamboo Society which has traced the Moso vegetation extending from the areas just north of the eastern course of the Yellow River to the south-eastern coast of China (Fu 2000, 16), of which the historical territories of Chu formed part. Further tests of the bamboo fibres confirm that the ink can be datable to the fourteenth century or earlier (Zhu Yuanqing 2002, 3). On closer examination the bamboo corpus recorded historical events related to the State of Chu and the calligraphy conforms to the Chu style of writing. For argument’s sake, since the bamboo slips were not found *in-situ* in a Chu tomb, they could be the work of counterfeiters who could have used pre-fourteenth century ink on third century BCE bamboo slips to fabricate the corpus. However, because of their age the bamboo slips were exceedingly delicate to handle; even the Shanghai Museum, given its know-how and resources, has found the restoration and handling of the bamboo slips extremely challenging. In these circumstances it would be hard to imagine that a private individual or even a cohort of experts could have procured the right materials and mastered the techniques to fake over a thousand bamboo slips. Besides, the calligraphy is remarkably artistic and the contents of the corpus, where there are no equivalent received texts, exhibit distinguished scholarship. Whilst it is not entirely impossible for the corpus to be a counterfeit it would be a case of *ben trovato* if it were, and on the balance of evidence it is highly unlikely to be a fake. Although the scientific and empirical analyses fall short of authenticating the corpus beyond a

shadow of a doubt, they have, to a large extent, dispelled suspicions of its spuriousness. Therefore in the absence of any contradictory evidence thus far, this project has relied upon the expert opinions of the scientists and archaeologists to the effect that the bamboo corpus is of authentic antiquity as claimed.

Following the acquisition of the bamboo corpus from Hong Kong the Shanghai Museum spent the next three years restoring and preserving the bamboo slips. On completion of the preservation work textual studies began in earnest in 1997. The corpus of over 1,200 bamboo slips boasts some 35,000 ancient graphs and over ten calligraphers' handwriting styles, the texts of which have now been transcribed into modern Chinese. The whole corpus is found to comprise over a hundred manuscripts (Ma 2001, 3), ninety per cent of which have no received texts. Thematically they are found to be philosophical, historical, religious, military, educational, musical, political, philological and other discourses (Chen Xiejun 2001, 2), of which "Kongzi shilun" is one. As the manuscript has no parallel transmitted text, and that some Chu graphs remain unrecognizable and some parts of the texts are missing, the study of the manuscript is beset with difficulties, not the least of which is consensus on the transcription and interpretation of many key parts of the manuscript.

To date, many scholars have contributed to the research into "Kongzi shilun". In his 2013 paper Paul Goldin published his study on "Heng Xian" 恆先, one of the manuscripts in the same unprovenanced *Shangbo* corpus, but then in the same breath he questioned whether it is ethical to research into looted materials. He further considered that scholars are guilty by association of incentivizing rampages that have resulted in the destruction of historical and contextual evidence of the artefacts. Some museums in the West have embarked on the policy of not acquiring looted artefacts but Chinese museums have not. Goldin advocates that scholars should refrain from providing expertise to authenticating or studying plundered materials (2013, 157-8). Goldin's 'moral awakening' is of course highly commendable; it must have been hard for him, having researched into both provenanced and unprovenanced texts, to reflect on this issue; just as it is hard for someone who has enjoyed eating the omelette to cry foul at other people breaking an egg. Goldin stopped short of charging the Chinese law enforcement authorities on whom the responsibility of abating the crime must rest, and by foregrounding the alleged complicity of scholars the focus of the problem has been shifted. But in the case of

“Kongzi shilun” the egg cannot be unscrambled. Now that the ransom had been paid, albeit unwisely in hind sight, a pragmatic approach to make the most of the ‘redeemed’ artefact which, not only Chinese scholars but also sinologists, Edward Shaughnessy for one, regard as “undeniably precious” (2006, 12), may perhaps be justified. The scholars’ guilt in complicity may be absolved and their guilty conscience assuaged by their contribution to the advancement of knowledge through related researches.

2. The *Shijing* 詩經 and its Commentarial Tradition

2.1. Transmission

The *Shijing*, the subject of inquiry of “Kongzi shilun”, is also known as *The Book of Poetry*, *The Book of Songs*, *The Classic of Poetry*, *The Book of Odes* or simply the *Odes*. *Shi* 詩 Poetry – as it was known during Confucius’ time before its canonization – collectively refers to the Zhou 周 dynasty (eleventh to sixth century BCE) folk songs, ballads and ritual anthems the authorship of which, with a few exceptions, can no longer be ascertained.³ Contrary to this conventional view is Li Chendong’s 李辰冬 (1907-1983) claim that the entire collection of the *Odes* was the work of a single poet named Yin Jifu 尹吉甫 (circa 800 BCE), who was a military officer during the reign of King Xuan of Zhou 周宣王 (1974, 30). Whilst this view is considered by many to be controversial, Li’s research at least shows that more odes could have been written by Yin Jifu than previously known.⁴ On the other hand, Ye Shuxian’s 葉舒憲 work traces the origins of the *Odes* to benedictory or maledictory prayers and spells created and transmitted by the *shiren* 寺人 (castrated priest-administrators) and *gumeng* 瞽矇 (blind musicians and historians) in ancient China (1996, 147-57; 248-53).

The text of the *Shijing* as received today comprises four divisions: the “Guofeng” 國風 or simply the “Feng” which has been literally translated as “Airs of

³ The purported authorship of the odes as given in the “Great preface” 毛詩序 is considered unreliable (Legge 1966, 29)).

⁴ Yin Jifu has been named in two odes: Ode 177 “Liuyue” 六月 and Ode 259 “Songao” 崧高. The Mao preface ascribes Ode 260 “zhengmin” 烝民, Ode 261 “Hanyi” 韓奕 and Ode 262 “Jiangnan” 江漢 to Yin. For arguments against Li’s proposition see 詩經名著評介 (A critique on famous commentaries on the *Shijing*) by Zhao Zhiyang 趙制陽.

the States”. It contains folk songs which had been collected from fifteen regional communities or states out of hundreds that were in existence at that time. It would be rash to denigrate these folk songs as banal or even vulgar, as did Zheng Qiao 鄭樵 (1104-1162) and Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130-1200), who suggest that they were mainly love songs or lyrics created by ghetto dwellers and sung by lowbrow men and women.⁵ Chen Zhi 陳致 asserts from a thematic perspective that a number of *feng* odes were the works of the remnants of the Shang 商 (circa 1600-1027 BCE) elites lamenting their halcyon days before falling to the Zhou (1999, 388-9). The second and third divisions are the “Xiaoya” 小雅 or the “Lesser Elegantiae” and the “Daya” 大雅 or the “Greater Elegantiae”, which comprises festal lyrics of royal courts and depictions of aristocratic activities. The last division, the “Song” 頌 or the “Lauds” are ritual anthems or elegies for use during ancestral worships and sacrificial ceremonies of the states. The taxonomy of the odes has always been controversial: some commentators consider the “Feng”, the “Ya” and the “Song” to be textual topoi; others find them to be musical rubrics as well as geographic or ethnic designations; still others hold that they reflect rhetorical or functional differences (Yu 2008, 13-6). Chen Zhi asserts that the “Feng” is a division derived from a type of musical instrument, namely wind instruments for accompanying the poems, and the “Song”, percussive bells etc (1999, 21-2); the “Nan” 南 is a distinct section (1999, 235-6). The Mao “Great preface” 詩大序 to the *Shijing* further sub-divides the “Feng” and the “Ya” into the “Changed Airs” or “Bianfeng” 變風, the “Changed Elegantiae” or “Bianya” 變雅, as they depict the grievous, the lamentable and the sardonic (Legge 1994, 4:36]. Elaborating on this concept, later scholars such as Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (127-200) and Kong Yingda 孔穎達 (574-648) attempted to distinguish the *bian* from the *zheng* 正 (the proper or the unchanged), identifying the latter with the gracious and the panegyric. However, as Yu Xing 于興 points out, modern scholarship considers these subdivisions meaningless (2006, 19-21).

The *Shi*, as did other classical texts of the pre-Qin 先秦 era, survived the biblioclast of Qin (221-207 BCE) through oral transmission in early Han 漢 (202

⁵ Zheng Qiao 鄭樵: “風者，出於風土，大概小夫賤吏婦人女子之言。” See vol. 3 of the *Liuqing aolun* 六經奧論卷三 (In-depth discussions on the six canons). Zhu Xi 朱熹: “凡詩之所謂風者，多出於里巷歌謠之作，所謂男女相與詠歌，各言其情者也。” See vol. 1 *Shijiazhuo* 詩集傳卷一 (The collected elaboration on the Odes).

BCE-220 CE); the prosodic texture of the odes is mnemonically conducive to mental recovery. In Han four schools of the *Shi* were established: the Han 韓, Lu 魯 and Qi 齊 collectively known as the *sanjiashi* 三家詩 (the three scholarly lineages of *shi*), and the Mao 毛 school, each having its own textual version and exegesis. The *sanjiashi* have been referred to as *jinwenjing* 今文經 (new text) as their oral transmissions were subsequently recorded on silk or bamboo slips in *lishu* 隸書, the standardized Qin script which continued to be used in Han. The Mao tradition, on the other hand, has been labelled *guwenjing* 古文經 (old text) as its text was derived from some primordial corpora written in pre-Qin scripts that had subsequently re-emerged after a long period of absence.

During the Han dynasty the Han, Lu and Qi *sanjiashi* had been accredited and institutionalized by the imperial establishment. Being *ex-officio* they enjoyed advantages in their transmission over the *Maoshi* 毛詩. However they had been increasingly engaged in theorizing trivialities and their prolix expositions became embroiled in *yinyang* 陰陽 and *wuxing* 五行 (the five elements) supernaturalism.⁶ Scholars of *jinwenjing* held that Confucius was a politician who wrote the Six Canons 六經 (of which the *Shijing* forms part)⁷ for propagating his political ideology. The *Maoshi*, on the other hand, had been in circulation among *hoi polloi*. *Guwenjing* scholars maintained that Confucius was the editor, not the author, of the six canons which were regarded as historical scriptures and not political doctrines. The Mao commentarial tradition was grounded on Confucius’ moral teachings with emphases on etymological investigations. It was not until Han Zhangdi’s 漢章帝 (76-88) reign that official status of scholarship was conferred upon the *Maoshi*. However with the *sanjiashi*’s focus on the supernatural and the mystical, the *Maoshi* gradually surpassed the *sanjiashi* in popularity. The Han, Lu and Qi *shi* versions together with their glosses eventually faded into oblivion with the decline of the Han regime (Yu Xing 2008, 65-6). By the time of the Six Dynasties 六朝 (the third to sixth centuries), the *sanjiashi* disappeared altogether except their fragments as

⁶ ‘Supernaturalism’ is translated from a traditional term “識緯神學” adopted by Yu Xing. Yu maintains that *Maoshi* scholars distinguished themselves from *sanjiashi* scholars adhering to Confucius’ doctrine of not speaking of prodigies, force, disorder and gods (不語怪、力、亂、神) (*Analects* 7.21; Lau 2000, 60-1) (Yu 2010, 65). Sinologists, however, prefer to call it ‘cosmology’ or ‘metaphysics’.

⁷ The six canons are the *Shi* 詩, the *Shu* 書, the *Li* 禮, the *Yue* 樂, the *Yi* 易 and the *Chunqiu* 春秋.

collected in the work of the Qing scholar Wang Xianqian 王先謙 (1842-1917), and the *Hanshi* in the *Hanshi waizhuan* 韓詩外傳 (Exoteric commentary on the *Hanshi*) by Han Ying 韓嬰 (circa 200 BCE), whilst the *Maoshi* has survived (Karlgrén 1924, 71) and has been synonymous with the *Shijing* ever since.

The Chinese intellectuals have never taken the study of the *Shijing* lightly as it has aesthetically informed and inspired them for over two thousand years. Confucius had strongly emphasized the importance of studying the *Odes*, the didactic of which forms an integral part of his ideology. During the Warring States period verses from the *Shijing* had been widely quoted in diplomatic parlance as part of the *démarche* which could mean the difference of war or peace between states.⁸ This anthology of poems is a comprehensive repository of historical information about the ethos of ancient China: the social mores, the daily life: singing, praising, worshiping, lamenting, farming, hunting, feasting, courting, parting as well as the political and ritual institutions. It is also a rich library of literary expressions; an encyclopedic reference, in a sense, of the fauna, flora and other artifacts of the time. According to Yu Xing, among the poems there are over 50 poetic tropes describing the motion of the hand, some 260 types of plants, birds, animals, fish and insects mentioned, with many more rhetorical devices, onomatopoeias, assonating and reduplicative binomes (2010, 163). Chen Zhi further observes that a large number of musical instruments have been described in various odes (1999, 42-3). It can be said that woven into the text of the *Shijing* is the very fabric of ancient Chinese civilization.

Not only has the *Shijing* been revered by the Chinese since pre-imperial times, it has also fascinated the Western intelligentsia such as the Jesuits, linguists, sinologists and poets since the seventeenth century. The poems have been widely translated into Latin, French, English, German, Russian, Japanese and Dutch with many outstanding anthropological, lexicological and literary studies published in foreign languages (Wu 2008, 10-36). With its dense metaphors and archaic language the *Shijing* is one of the classical documents through which ancient Chinese culture reveals herself to the modern world, whilst “Kongzi shilun” is the newly discovered key to unlock its obscurity – only that the key is no less obscure. The object of this project is to find out how this key works, and apply it to unlock the meaning of the poetry.

⁸ Instead of listing examples from primary sources of the *Shiji* or the *Zuozhuan* etc, see François Jullien’s commentary (2000, 88).

2.2. Textual Variance

Despite different possible origins of the *Odes* as previously noted, it is almost certain that the poems have undergone changes during different stages of oral transmission, textualization and subsequent redaction. In “The hereditary house of Confucius” in the *Shiji* 史記・孔子世家, Sima Qian 司馬遷 (145? BCE-87? CE) claimed that during Confucius’ time there had been some 3,000 poems in circulation from which Confucius had selected one-tenth to form the corpus of the *Shi*. Later scholars such as Kong Yingda, Zhu Xi and particularly those of the Qing dynasty have either modified or refuted outright Sima Qian’s view (Zhu Jinfa 2007, 47-51). As the odes had been collected from more than 20 different states within the Yangtze and Yellow river basins over a period of some 600 years from early Zhou to the late Chunqiu period 春秋時代 (the Spring and Autumn Period, 772-481 BCE), it is surprising to see that the poems show little linguistic and dialectal mutations which are otherwise expected from chronological and geographical transitions. This phenomenon has led a number of eminent scholars, Guo Moruo 郭沫若 (1982-1978) for one, to believe that the *Odes* have been re-worked, polished and standardized by different editors over the years (1973, 103-4).⁹ Lee Kar Shui 李家樹 subscribes to Sima Qian’s view that editorial work of the *Odes* was the centralized function of the court musicians, but the process of collection, transmission and revision had “inflicted much harm to the original face of the odes”. On the strength of the comprehensive work by scholars such as Chen Qiaocong 陳喬樞 (1809-1869), and in view of the numerous textual variants found among the *sanjiashi*, the *Maoshi* and ode citations in excavated tomb manuscripts, Lee further postulates that the text of the *Shijing* as received today is not the same as those prevailing in the Qin and Han times, let alone that of the pre-Qin era (1985, 6-9). If Lee’s observation were correct then it would be a dilemma for the study of “Kongzi shilun”: the author was possibly commenting on the odes which were greatly different to those as received today. Martin Kern has also raised serious concern about the textual integrity of the *Maoshi*

⁹ This is probably the result of the use of standard idiom, referred to as ‘*yayan*’ 雅言 among the elite and the literate, as it was written in the *Analects* 7.18: “What the Master used the correct pronunciation for was the *Odes*, the *Book of History* and the performance of the rites. In all these cases he used the correct pronunciation (子所雅言，詩、書、執禮，皆雅言也) (D. C. Lau 2000, 60-1). Kern translates 雅言 as “elegant standard speech” which transcends “dialectal differences” and “local writing” (Kern 2003, 51-2).

and the study of “Kongzi shilun”. The problem of textual variance can easily be overstated and Kern’s claim will be contested in the Methodology section.

2.3. The Commentarial Tradition

Over the years the *Shijing* has attracted unceasing critical attention culminating in a plethora of commentaries. Prior to the discovery of “Kongzi shilun”, the “Mao preface” 毛詩序 and the *Maoshi zhuanjian* were the earliest extant exegeses on the received text of the *Shijing*.¹² In the course of transmission and subsequent redaction the “Mao preface” had been split into sub-sections and labelled the “Great preface” 大序 and the “Little preface” 小序 (otherwise known as the “Minor preface”; the “Upper preface” and “Lower preface” etc). The “Great preface” is a commentary on the *Odes* as a whole, commenting on the formation and functions of the *Shi*; the “Little preface” elucidates the individual poems. The *Maoshi zhuanjian* is in fact an exegesis written by Zheng Xuan explicating the *Shigu xunzhuan* 詩詁訓傳 (Philological and exegesis on the *Odes*) which is in turn an exegesis on the *Shi* ascribed to Mao Heng 毛亨 (circa Western Han) (Yu Xing 2010, 76). In essence, the *Maoshi zhuanjian* arbitrarily assign meanings to most of the odes either as burlesques (*ci* 刺) on the immorality or panegyrics (*mei* 美) on the virtues of the sovereigns and their consorts. The exegetical literature kept expanding after the Han but one could look upon the *Maoshi zhuanjian* as the frame of critical reference on which subsequent scholarship is based and against which criticisms are launched. Another stratum of exegetical work on the *Maoshi zhuanjian* was added by Kong Yingda, the chief editor of *The Maoshi zhengyi* 毛詩正義 (The correct interpretation of the *Odes*) in the Tang 唐 dynasty (618-907). Sceptical of the Han exegetical authorities, the Song 宋 (960-1279) scholar Ouyang Xiu’s 歐陽修 (1007-1072) critiques of the Mao prefaces and Zheng’s commentaries were as iconoclastic as they were conservative, seeking on the one hand to re-read the *feng* odes as love songs but on the other hand trying to uphold the moral tradition (Van Zoeren 1991, 161, 189). Zhu Xi, the sentinel of Confucianism of the Song, lends his weight to discarding the

¹² Although pre-Qin literature such as the *Mencius*, the *Xunzi* and the *Liji* 禮記 etc have recorded commentaries on the *Shi* they are fragmentary rather than monographic. They are *shi* citations, not exegeses, and the *Hanshi Waizhuan* is more of a handbook of examples of using *shi* for didactic purposes. See discussion in Chapter 5.

Mao prefaces and re-examining the meanings of the odes. Although his commentary moves away from the historic-political horizon of the Mao prefaces and manages to re-delineate the meaning of some of the poems, he has not ventured outside the moralistic schema of the Mao tradition.

The Qing 清 (1644-1911) dynasty first saw the revival of the *guwenjing* tradition of the Han flourishing as philological and phonological investigations, but studies in *jinwenjing* focusing on philosophical precepts also blossomed. In the unsettling social and political atmosphere of the later part of the Manchu reign, *jinwenjing* studies re-captured the fancy of those progressively-minded scholars such as Gong Zizhen 龔自珍 (1792-1841) and Kang Youwei 康有為 (1858-1927) who delved into the remnants of the *sanjiashi* tradition and re-invigorated the idea that Confucius was a political reformist who promoted his agenda through the canons that he wrote. The interpretation of certain odes in the “Ya” and the “Song” divisions had been stretched to underpin the need for political reform as instigated by the Master, justifying socio-political chaos as a prerequisite for orderly government. In the field of *Shijing* studies Wang Xianqian has worked on the remnants of the *sanjiashi* as mentioned earlier. Ma Ruichen’s 馬瑞辰 (1782-1853) *Maoshi zhuanjian tongshi* 毛詩傳箋通釋 (An exegesis on the *Maoshi zhuanjian*) is one of the distinguished works building on his thorough knowledge of both *guwenjing* and *jinwenjing*. Other scholars who rejected the moralistic interpretations of the Mao prefaces began to explore the literary and aesthetic aspects of the *Shijing*. Among them Yao Jiheng 姚際恆 (1647-1715), Cui Shu 崔述 (1740-1816) and Fang Yurun 方玉潤 (1811-1883) are most renowned (Li Xiangeng 1986, 2; Yu Xing 2008, 114-22).

In summing up the *Shi* commentarial tradition Karlgren suggests that “most of this commentary literature is void of value ... since 95 percent of it consist of homiletics and moralizing effusions” (1942, 71). Whilst this may seem to be an overstatement, it would be fair to say that a large part of the exegetical legacy of the *Shijing* handed down since Han times is at best didactically motivated and at worst historically politicized. The study of the *Shijing* underwent a paradigm shift in the early part of the twentieth century when a new generation of Chinese scholars, who had been educated in the West, made fresh attempts to read the poems. One of them is Hu Shi 胡適 (1891-1962) who interpreted the *Shijing* using Western literary theories (Zhu Jinfa 2007, 3), whilst poet and scholar Wen Yiduo 聞一多 (1899-1946)

asserted that the *Odes* should be interpreted within the socio-cultural contexts of their times. Wen, among others, has since then ushered in a new interpretative approach: the anthropological studies of the *Shijing* which has inspired contemporary studies from many different perspectives.

The commentarial tradition of the *Shijing* has been a fertile ground for creative interpretation. Whilst a cornucopia of such commentaries survived since the Han era, the literature concerning the study of the *Shi* before the Han period is fragmentary. “Kongzi shilun” is an exegetical discourse on the *Shi* attributed to Confucius and Confucian scholars. So far it antedates the extant commentarial literature of the *Shijing* and may reveal fresh insights into the study of the *Shi* in the pre-Qin era, an inquiry to which this thesis is dedicated.

3. Literature Review

This section will highlight the research undertaken by eminent scholars on “Kongzi shilun”. The nicety of their opinions will be examined when the relevant topics arise in the course of later discussions.

Leading the charge to decode the ancient graphs of “Kongzi shilun” were lexicologists and philologists whose transcriptions of the manuscript into modern Chinese text lay the foundation for further research. The studies conducted by Ma Chengyuan, Pu Maozuo 濮茅左, Li Xueqin 李學勤, Li Ling 李零, Liao Mingchun 廖名春, Jiang Guanghui 姜廣輝, Fan Yuzhou 范毓周, Cao Feng 曹峰, Qiu Xigui 裘錫圭, Chi Hsiu-sheng 季旭昇, He Linyi 何琳儀, Li Rui 李銳, Chao Fulin 晁福林, Zhou Fengwu 周鳳五, Huang Ren'er 黃人二, Bai Yulan 白於藍, Li Tianfu 李添富, Chang Pao-San 張寶三, Yeh Kuo-Liang 葉國良 and many others have been published in various monographs and academic journals. They have separately covered a wide range of topics such as the philology of the manuscript, the transposition of the archaic texts into modern Chinese, the interpretation and philosophical aspects of the discourse, dating, authorship, writing styles, textual reconstruction, denomination and paragraphing of the manuscript. Within the overall consensus of the modern transcriptions are specific Chu graphs that have yet to be identified with certainty and agreement. There are also different views on the order of the slips and on the punctuation and paragraphing of the text, resulting in many different interpretations.

Huang Dekuan 黃德寬 has collaborated with He Linyi and Xu Zaiguo 徐在國 on a monograph on the philological study of Chu bamboo graphs covering not only the *Shangbo Chujian* but also the Guodian and other bamboo corpora, thus facilitating the synchronic investigations of Chu bamboo scriptures.

Codicological studies have been undertaken by Jiang Linchang 江林昌, Xu Zhengying 徐正英, Hu Ying 胡鶯 and Lu Siyu 陸絲雨 focusing on the authorship and dating of the manuscript. Various possibilities regarding the author of “Kongzi shilun” have been proposed but on the strength of the evidence presented, any efforts to ascribe authorship to the historical personage of Confucius, his grandson or their specific disciples remain speculative. It has also been suggested that the epithet of ‘孔子’ (Confucius or Confucian) be dropped from the title of the manuscript which should simply be re-titled “Shishuo” 詩說.

Ikeda Tomohisa’s 池田知久 research on silk and bamboo manuscripts is known for his exploration of their implicit ideological values. His essay on “Confucian Poetics” is an inquiry into the collocation of poetics and *li* 禮 (rituals), claiming that the manuscript is related to Xunzi’s 荀子 (313-238 BCE) teaching (2006, 376-402).

Noteworthy are a number of comprehensive inquiries dedicated to the study of “Kongzi shilun”. Cao Jianguo’s 曹建國 monograph is not only a textual study of the manuscript but also an investigation into the poetics of the pre-Qin era. Huang Huaixin’s 黃懷信 work as a complete interpretation of “Kongzi shilun” is inspiring, so is Liu Xinfang’s 劉信芳 monograph. Liu has also analysed the philosophical imports of the manuscript in terms of its critical framework of *xing* 性, *qing* 情, *li* 禮, *zhi* 智 and other concepts with reference to coetaneous excavated texts. These studies have contributed to the in-depth investigation of “Kongzi shilun” with remarkable insight but it is felt that some of their claims and interpretations are debatable or can be developed further.

Yu Fu’s 于蔭 philological study firstly investigates into textual variances among the four schools of the *Odes* through cross-referencing particular graphs with inscriptions on bronze, stele, bamboo and silk artefacts. Secondly, it is a glossary of selected Chu graphs of “Kongzi shilun” with a concise explication of the manuscript.

Chen Tongsheng's 陳桐生 monograph embraces diachronic and synchronic studies of "Kongzi shilun", covering the trajectory of *Shi* studies from the Warring States period to the Han as well as explicating the philosophical import and the themes of the poems. Chen examines the authorship of "Kongzi shilun" in great detail and points out that it is the first literary critique of the themes of the odes. He posits a close theoretical relationship between "Kongzi shilun" and Xunzi's poetics. An exegesis on the manuscript is also included but the exposition is brief.

Focusing on Confucius' "speech education" for the shaping of the *junzi ru* 君子儒, Yu Zhihui 俞志慧 examines the concepts of poetics in light of canonical texts and "Kongzi shilun". A glossary of the Chu graphs is also provided. Wei Tzu-Te's 魏慈德 textual study compares poetic lines quoted in the manuscript to the four schools, reaching the conclusion that textually "Kongzi shilun" is more closely affiliated with *Lushi* but the exposition of poetic themes is more in line with those of *Hanshi*. Zheng Gang's 鄭剛 monograph is an exposition of *Shi* learning focusing on various Chu bamboo manuscripts, covering a combination of philological and philosophical issues including a brief comparative study of "Kongzi shilun" and the remnants of *Qishi* as seen in extant literature.

The works of Western sinologists include Martin Kern's study on the textual variance between the received odes and their quotations in excavated texts and related hermeneutic issues as previously noted. Based on Jiang Guanghui's transcription Jonathan Krause has translated the manuscript into English. In his paper Thies Staack presents his textual reconstruction proposal having regard to the "material" and "textual" criteria pertaining to the bamboo slips and a tentative translation of "Kongzi shilun" in English. Both Krause's and Staack's translations facilitate general understanding of the text but with room for fine-tuning.

Using Ode 16 "Gantang" as a case study, Michael Hunter examines the rhetorical use of "Kongzi yue" (孔子曰) in "Kongzi shilun" and claims that the quotation marker is used to generate new layers of commentary to older materials. Furthermore, Hunter considers Confucius to be a master of 'derivative wisdom' and doubts if the *Shi* commentaries are 'teachings' in the normal sense of the word. Ulrike Middendorf's paper 梅道芬 approaches "Kongzi shilun" from a linguistic point of view, analysing and interpreting its rhetorical structures and formulaic patterns, identifying its key words and phrases that serve as the triggers and contexts

of meaning. The manuscript is then compared with parallel texts from received classics and recovered documents. This paper also presents a direct transcription and “an analogous normalized and punctuated transcription” of “Kongzi shilun”.

Keen interest in “Kongzi shilun” can also be seen in the large number of research projects undertaken by academia in China and Taiwan. Kong Shaofeng’s 康少峰 doctoral thesis focuses on the structural and codicological issues of the manuscript, viewing it as part of the “Zigao” codex 子羔篇 within the *Shangbo* corpus. Wang Huaping 王化平 investigates into Confucius’ ideology through comparing his discourses found in recovered and received texts including “Kongzi shilun”. Pham Lee-Moi 范麗梅 critically reviews the methodology and scholarship of interpreting bamboo and silk texts from philological, linguistic, social and hermeneutical perspectives. More prolific are MA dissertations which cover the general and the specific aspects of “Kongzi shilun”. Tan Zhonghua’s 譚中華 study is a general inquiry into codicological issues of authorship, scholastic lineage, slip arrangements and textual re-construction etc. Fan Zhiou 范知歐 extends the study of authorship to investigations into the rhetoric and genre of the manuscript through textual comparison with received and recovered texts. Within the framework of codicology of the manuscript researchers furthered their investigation into its philological issues (such as the studies by Chen Qiong 陳瓊, Zhao Yuansu 趙苑夙 and Zhang Tonghoi 張通海 and Chi Linhua 遲林華), its philosophical import particularly *qing* and *li* (Zeng Ziying 曾子滌, Li Rui 李銳), its intertextuality with received classics and recovered texts (Huang Baojuan 黃寶娟). Zhu Hong 朱紅 looks into the controversial question of Confucius’ emendation of the *Odes* based on received texts and “Kongzi shilun”. Similarly Li Chan 李嬋 extends the inquiry to cover the aesthetic aspects of Confucius’ poetics. Through “Kongzi shilun” Du Chunlong 杜春龍 stages comparative studies of the four scholastic lineages of the *Odes*. Fang Ruili 房瑞麗 reviews the practices of poetry creation, citation and critique during the pre-Qin era, and the trajectory of Rujia poetics, so do Zheng Jingxuan 鄭靖暄 and Liu Zhaomin 劉昭敏. Huang Yanlian 黃炎蓮 attempts to uncover the meaning of the odes through “Kongzi shilun”. Researches in to the didactics of the *Shi* tradition includes works by Liang Dawei 梁大偉, Zhang Ying 張鶯 and Jiang, Han 江瀚 and Liu Zhaomin 劉昭敏. Liu Yuling’s 劉如玲 dissertation

is about textual comparison between “Kongzi shilun” and the Mao prefaces. Li, Shuling 李姝菱 focuses on explicating the concept of *zong er jie* 終而偕 as read in “Kongzi shilun”.

As to the study of the *Shijing* itself the authorities consulted are: Zheng Xuan, Zhu Xi, Fang Yurun, Ma Ruichen, Wang Xianqian, Wen Yiduo and others whose works will not be enumerated here. Contemporary studies of the *Shijing* include Cai Xianjin’s 蔡先金 work exploring the functional and aesthetic notions of *qing*, *li*, music and rhetoric from literary, historical and philological perspectives; Wang Chujing’s 王初慶 paper focuses on the Confucian scholarship in poetry as seen from “Kongzi shilun”.

The vast literature has covered a plethora of views on “Kongzi shilun” and the *Shijing*, providing the bases for more in-depth study and critique. Many researchers have inquired into the philosophical perport, particularly in terms of *qing* and *li* of “Kongzi shilun” but few have reflected on whether the manuscript has inspired deeper understanding of the *Odes*, one of the issues that this thesis will address.

4. The Problem

Since the discovery of “Kongzi shilun” in 1994, Chinese scholars have contributed profusely to the study of the manuscript whilst the works of Western Sinologists in this area have been relatively few. However, the grand mass of literature accumulated to date, helpful as it is, seems to have been discriminately topical. The paucity of comprehensive and systematic studies of the manuscript in English means that a lot more work has to be done in this regard. English translations of the manuscript, few and far between as they currently are, only provide a general idea of the contents but the nuances of the original discourse have yet to be articulated. Building on the existent philological studies of the manuscript, this project aims at producing a comprehensively annotated translation of the manuscript for facilitating further inquiries into the *Shijing* and its commentarial tradition. A comprehensible and reliable translation of the text, supported by considered opinions, could shed new light on the *Odes*, if there is indeed new light to be shed, or else our current understanding of the *Odes* could be confirmed or enhanced.

Based on the findings of the textual study and translation, I shall review the manuscript critically *vis-à-vis* the pre-Qin and Han commentarial tradition. This period of scholarship is chosen because of its close propinquity to “Kongzi shilun”. More importantly, the Han commentaries have forged a template for glossing the *Odes* and have become a paradigmatic framework of interpretation within which subsequent scholarship has developed or against which critiques have been launched. Against the background of the Han scholars’ moral reading of the *Odes*, I posit that in “Kongzi shilun” the author has fundamentally taken a sensual reading by adopting *qing* and *li* as his critical perspectives. Although previous studies of the manuscript have covered these critical angles, it appears that the notion of *qing* has escaped the detailed attention it deserves. This may have been a coincidence: the “Great preface”, having first identified *qing* as the motivational force behind poetic creativity, stopped short at expounding its intricacies by shifting to a moralistic exegetical stance.¹³ In this thesis the ‘moral’ means the reading of morality into the poetry, as the Han scholars have done, propounding *li* as a pedagogic tool of the sage kings to impart ethical principles to the people. The ‘sensual’ is taken to mean *qing* which embraces the ambit of human emotions, passions and feelings that the author of “Kongzi shilun” reads from the poems. I shall argue that between the poiesis of *qing* and the bounds of *li*, “Kongzi shilun” has now filled in the elision of the Han scholarship on the notion that germinates poetry. This thesis does not seek to subvert the concept of *li* or the moral efficacy in the hermeneutics of the *Shijing*, but to claim that the Confucian view in “Kongzi shilun” does not censure *qing* or the poems that celebrate it, whilst hedging against its excesses through *li* as a means of transcending human desires and regulating social and spiritual relations. Incidental to my inquiry into *qing*, I shall firstly counter the claim made by A. C. Graham who propounds that the word *qing* never means ‘passions’ in pre-Han literature. Secondly, clarification will be sought from “Kongzi shilun” on Confucius’ remarks on the *Odes* – the controversial ideas of *si wu xie* 思無邪 and *Zheng sheng yin* 鄭聲淫.

The pre-Qin era to which “Kongzi shilun” has been dated, particularly the Chunqiu and the Warring States Periods 戰國時代 (475-221 BCE), was the golden age of intellectual enterprises in China, when ‘a hundred schools of thoughts flourished’ despite the turbulent political and social situations of the time. However,

¹³ See the ‘Epimyth of the Moral’ section in Chapter 5.

the biblioclasm of Qin and the interdiction of books, which was not relaxed until early Han, meant the abrupt and almost total loss of this rich intellectual legacy. The pre-Qin scholarship as received today, especially of the *Shijing*, has long been moulded by the subjectivity of the Han literati through whose looking glasses the true nature of learning has been tinted, though their dominance has not remained unchallenged by scholars of later times. The entombed palaeographic manuscripts of that golden age, having been spared from the consuming flames of despotism and having escaped doctoring by the lesser hand of later scribes, emerged from the stygian treasure-troves to speak for their late master's love of learning that was once the favourite pastime of the elites of a bygone era. Only by bypassing the conduit of transmission manipulated by the Han clerisy could their tunnel vision be avoided and the truth illuminated. Having preserved the essence of pre-Qin learning for over two millennia, the manuscripts' reappearance to the mere mortals of today must be awe-inspiring. The discovery of the manuscript has provided textual evidence for validating and reinterpreting the *Odes*, or otherwise re-constructing its *status quo ante*. If the scientific and empirical analyses of the *Shangbo Chujian* are reliable, and there is no reason to suspect that they are not, then it could be safely assumed that "Kongzi shilun" has not undergone any redaction by post-Qin hands; its unalloyed state might reveal not only the provenance of *Shi* pedagogic but also the trajectory of Confucian thought in the Chunqiu and Warring States times. This study is therefore an attempt to bridge the present knowledge gap pertaining to pre-Qin and Han leaning on the *Shijing*, and to contribute to the inquiry of Confucian ideology through understanding the sensual and moral aspects of the *Odes*.

5. Theoretical Framework

The preceding sections have introduced the *Shijing* as the oldest collection of Chinese poetry and "Kongzi shilun" the most ancient expository of the former, effectively putting both into contexts within which they could be better understood. Context is vital to the discernment of meaning, or the interpretive process as it is termed in hermeneutics. Interpretation is the task of making something that is unfamiliar, distant, and obscure in meaning into something real, near, and intelligible (Palmer 1969, 14, 24). "Kongzi shilun" and the *Shijing* as historical discourses are as distant as they are obscure because of their temporal, spatial and linguistic alterity,

but the principles of hermeneutics could be applied to divest the unfamiliarity of the ancient texts and to render their latent meaning intelligible.

Being doctrinally disposed, the Chinese have been preoccupied with the interpretation of canonical texts since ancient times for purposes of normative thematization and political advocacy, yet hermeneutical theories in the form of systematic enunciations are largely absent from Chinese thought (Van Zoeren 1991, 1-2). On the other hand, the theorization of hermeneutics has been a subject of abiding interest to Western thinkers since the eighteenth century. That interest was initially impelled by the quest for principles of interpreting the Bible but has subsequently developed into interpretive theories for both sacred and secular texts. In due course Western hermeneutics has evolved to become phenomenological and existential philosophies (Palmer 1969, 34-40) dealing with the epistemic and ontological aspects of interpretation. By contrast, it was not until the 1980s that Chinese scholars began to use the term ‘Chinese hermeneutics’ (Huang Junjie 2005, 353), the theorization of which has yet to mature into a distinctive discipline.¹⁴ That notwithstanding, Chinese scholars have been constantly interpreting and re-interpreting ancient texts without claiming that their practice lies under the aegis of hermeneutics. Instead of having a philosophical essence or being a distinct academic discipline, Chinese hermeneutics is a long tradition having an inherent historical interest, whose fragmentary theorization appears as *obiter dicta* found scattered among various classical discourses. This section will examine the general organon of the Chinese hermeneutical tradition focusing on the interpretation of the *Shijing*, with a cursory review of Western hermeneutical theories where the latter is thought to be of supplementary value.

5.1. Interpretation

Within the plethora of Chinese classics two principles considered to be of seminal significance to Chinese hermeneutics can be extrapolated from 5.B.8 and 5.A.4 of the *Mencius*: *zhiren lunshi* 知人論世 (knowing the authors and the age they lived in) and *yiyi nizhi* 以意逆志 (meeting the intent of the authors with sympathetic

¹⁴ See Li Qingliang’s *Zhongguo chanshi xue* 中國闡釋學 (Chinese hermeneutics) which adopts basic Western ideas from existential and philosophical hermeneutics with citations from the Chinese classics as support.

understanding).¹⁵ The hermeneutical purport of the first principle – knowing the authors and their times – foregrounds the need to interpret texts within their historical contexts. A parallel can be drawn to the theory propounded by German philosopher Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834): the reconstruction of the historical context of a given text is the basis of understanding. But Schleiermacher differs from Hans-Georg Gadamer's (1900-2002) idea of 'historicality of understanding' (Palmer 1969, 178-80), which seeks understanding through integration of the past, present and the future (Palmer 1969, 186). D. C. Lau's 劉殿爵 (1921-2010) translation of Mencius' term “論世” as ‘knowing the age’ is succinct. The broader sense of the word *lun* 論 could entail critical deliberations over and above simply knowing. Likewise the word *shi* 世 would embrace notions of historicality – the ethos of the era beyond the purely temporal sense of time.

Of particular importance is the concept of *zhi* 志 as mentioned in the *Mencius*, for the same word appears in “Kongzi shilun” with regard to poetry. Mencius' second principle of 以意逆志 – meeting the intent of the author with sympathetic understanding – can be interpreted in different ways. Zhao Qi 趙岐 (?-210) asserts that poetry (or any texts) should be interpreted in accordance with the intent of the poet or author (Huang Junjie 2008, 172). Zhu Xi adds that an interpreter should not subjectively impose meaning onto the text but should wait patiently for the author's intent to reveal itself. Contending Zhu Xi's passiveness, Nishijima Rankei 西島蘭溪 (1780-1852) maintains that authorial intent should be actively sought by “tracing through [the thoughts of] hundreds of generations” (quoted in Huang Junjie 2008, 173). According to the *Shuowen jiezi* 說文解字 the word *ni* 逆 means to meet, anticipate or encounter a person or thing coming from the other direction. James Legge translates 志 as the “general scope” of the text (Legge 1994, 1 and 2:353). Chen Shih-hsiang 陳世驥 (1912-1971) observes that in its archaic form the graph 志 is made up of the phonetic 止 (the ancient graph of *zhi* 之) meaning ‘foot’, ‘to go’ and ‘to stop’ (1951, 49) and the radical *xin* 心 (heart – to the Chinese the heart is

¹⁵ 孟子·萬章下 *Mencius* 5.B.8: “頌其詩，讀其書，不知其人，可乎？是以論世也。是尚友也” (When one reads the poems and writings of the ancients, can it be right not to know something about them as men? Hence one tries to understand the age in which they lived. This can be described as ‘looking for friends in history’) 萬章上 5.A.4: “故說詩者，不以文害辭，不以辭害志。以意逆志，是為得之。” (Hence in explaining an ode, one should not allow the words to get in the way of the sentence, nor the sentence to get in the way of the sense. The right way is to meet the intent of the poet with sympathetic understanding.) (Lau 2003, 236-7 and 200-1)

synonymous with the mind as the faculty for perception and thinking, thus the common translation of heart/mind). Hence 志 is where the heart/mind tends, for which ‘intent’ is probably the closest translation.¹⁶ Chinese hermeneutist Li Qingliang 李清良 offers a different term with the same meaning: meeting the author’s heart/mind with the interpreter’s heart/mind (以心會心). Apprehension is possible, according to Li’s hermeneutical model, when there is congruity of linguistic contexts (語境一致) between the interpreter and the interpreted (2001, 283-4). By foregrounding the linguisticity of apprehension, Li’s hermeneutic framework modulates 以意逆志 to a textual or linguistic process. In fact, getting to know the (ancient) poets or authors and the age in which they lived can only be possible through language or text. As Huang Junjie 黃俊傑 points out, these two concepts function together (2008, 178): knowing the authors and the age in which they lived would foster intertextual comprehension through ascertaining authorial intent, and vice versa. I might add that this may well be considered as the Chinese hermeneutic circle.

The hermeneutic circle is a Western concept whereby the meaning of “the part [of a text] is understood from the whole and the whole from the inner harmony of its parts” (Palmer 1969, 76-7). Expanding on this concept, Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) asserts that in interpreting text, human understanding does not arise from an empty consciousness but a ‘pre-structure’, or ‘ideational preconceptions’ as already established ways of seeing (Palmer 1969, 176). It would appear that Western hermeneutics articulates a possible explication of 以意逆志 when Mencius has not clarified its meaning. As understanding is the basis for all interpretation, it must be made within a horizon of “already granted meanings and intentions” which meet (corresponding to the Chinese concept of 逆) the horizon of the text (corresponding to the Chinese concept of 志) as it reveals itself. Palmer adds that “[t]his merging of two horizons (my note: corresponding to the Chinese concept of 意 and 志) must be considered a basic element in all explanatory interpretation” (Palmer 1969, 24-5). To Heidegger, uncovering the hidden meaning of a text is to go behind it and “ask what the author did not and could not say, yet which in the text comes to light as its innermost dynamic”. Thus it is not the text that is to be interpreted as an end in itself,

¹⁶ Explications of 詩、志 and 心 first appeared in the “Mao Great Preface” and the *Shang Shu* 尚書, see later discussion.

but rather it is the “inner violence and struggle which were at work in the creation of the text” (Palmer 1969, 147).

It does not come as a surprise when 志 is mentioned in “Kongzi shilun”; in fact it is a key concept of the exegetical tradition of the *Odes*, having different shades of meaning beyond intent – willpower, mind, central thought, emotions (Xiao 2006, 43-5), purpose, goal, target or aim (Van Zoeren 1991, 12), as it is understood today. As it is said in the “Canon of Shun” in the *Shang Shu* 尚書·舜典: poetry articulates aims; songs extend the utterance of the expressions; the utterances attune to the songs, which are harmonized by the music (詩言志，歌永言，聲依永，律和聲) (Van Zoeren 1991, 11). A similar statement, “詩以言志” is found in the annals of the twenty-seventh year of the Duke of Xiang as recorded in the *Zuo zhuan* 左傳·襄公二十七年. This concept is taken up in the “Great preface”: “Poetry is the product of earnest thought. Thought [cherished] in the mind becomes earnest; exhibited in words; it becomes poetry.” (詩者，志之所之也，在心為志，發言為詩) (Legge 1994, 4:34)]. Xiao Bing 蕭兵 explains that the graphs of 詩 and 志 share the same phonetic root of 之 and had been semantically interchangeable (2006, 36). Chen Shih-hsiang notes that they were not only close synonyms in their early usage; their distinct meanings could even have been represented by the same graph.¹⁷ Chen’s rendition of *shi yan zhi* 詩言志 is “poetry expresses purpose” and he was quick to point out its ambiguity: what should this purpose be? At one extreme there is the advocacy of practical, ethical and political purposes and on the other the emotional and aesthetical (1951, 54).

That the *Odes* expresses practical purposes has been the dominant view which finds direct support from two quotations from the *Analects*. Confucius had once instructed his son that unless he studies the *Odes* he would be “ill-equipped to speak” (不學詩無以言) (*Analects* 16.13; Lau 1992, 167). On another occasion Confucius explained that

詩，可以興，可以觀，可以群，可以怨...

[a]n apt quotation from the *Odes* may stimulate the imagination, endow one with breeding, enable one to live in a community and give expression to grievances.... (*Analects* 17.9; Lau 1992, 175)

¹⁷ A textual example of 志 used interchangeably with 詩 can be found in “賦不出鄭志” meaning ‘none of their citations are not from the poetry of the State of Zheng’, from the annals of the sixteenth year of the Duke of Zhao, *Zuo zhuan* 左傳昭公十六年. See footnote of Chen Shih-hsiang 1951, 52.

As reported in “Jingjie” of the *Liji* 禮記・經解, Confucius attributes gentleness and sincerity of deportment to the teaching of the *Odes* (溫柔敦厚詩教也) (Lau 1992a, 133). Thus for orthodox Confucians the *zhi* of an ode is its moral messages, as if it existed solely for ethical lessons to be learned. Little do they remember that *qing* has been mentioned in the “Great preface”; but through deliberation, so it seems, the *Maoshi* has downplayed *qing* as the motivational force of poetic creativity and emphasized its moral functions, as it asserts:

情動於中，而形於言 ... 情發於聲，聲成文謂之音¹⁸ 治世之音安以樂，其政和 ... 亡國之音哀以思，其民困 先王以是經夫婦，成孝敬，厚人倫，美教化，移風俗。

The feelings move inwardly, and are embodied in words ... The feelings go forth in sounds. When those sounds are artistically combined, we have what we called musical pieces The style of such pieces in an age of good order is quiet, going on to be joyful ... when a State is going to ruin, is mournful The former kings by this regulated the duties of husband and wife, effectually inculcated filial obedience and reverence, secured attention to all the relations of society, adorned the transforming influence of instruction, and transformed manners and customs.

(Legge 1994, 4. 34)]

The concept that *qing* germinates poetry and how it has faded away from the hermeneutical scene will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5. As discussed earlier the different shades of meaning of *zhi* – intent, willpower or purpose etc – predominantly denote the normative didactics as implied by the *Maoshi* tradition; the notion that it subsumes emotions (or vice versa) was probably a subtle re-introduction by Wang Yi 王逸 of Later Han (first and second centuries), who asserts that ‘emotion’ or *qing* is semantically interchangeable with *zhi*.¹⁹ This etymological notion was yet to be theorized as the hermeneutics of poetry; it was not until the Jin 晉 dynasty (266-420) when Lu Ji 陸機 (261-330) propounded the concept of ‘poetry expresses emotions’ (詩緣情) in his exquisite essay on literary criticism “Wen Fu” 文賦. Lu’s concept has been hailed as the antithesis of ‘poetry expressing purpose’ (詩言志), as if *zhi* and *qing* are regarded as diametrically opposed and mutually exclusive qualities. But as Chen Shih-hsiang has pointed out, in ancient times when old ideas were rejected

¹⁸ Yin 音 subsumes music, lyrics, poetry and tunes and within the context of the *Maoshi*, it stands for the *Odes*.

¹⁹ Wang Yi, in his annotation of “Jiuzhang” of the *Chuci* 楚辭・九章・惜誦: “恐情質之不信兮”, said “情, 志也。” – emotion is purpose. See *Chuci zhangju* 楚辭章句 1-4: 70.

the introduction of new ideas would not be too drastic; it was a matter of assimilation and accommodation. Thus the birth of a new binome by combining 情 and 志 into ‘emotive purposiveness’ (情志) found its way to the distinguished critical works such as the *Wenxin diaolong* 文心雕龍 by Liu Xie 劉勰 (circa 465-?) and the *Shi pin* 詩品 by Zhong Rong 鍾嶸 (468-518) (Chen 1951, 57).

The aporia of two diametrically opposed interpretive approaches to the *Odes* – the practical and moralistic on the one hand, the emotive and aesthetic on the other – has been perpetuated by Confucius’ comments:

詩三百，一言以蔽之，曰“思無邪”

The *Odes* are three hundred in number. They can be summed up in one phrase, “Swerving not from the right path.” (*Analects* 2.2; Lau 1992b, 10-1),

and in 15.11: *Zheng sheng yin* 鄭聲淫 (the tunes of Zheng are wanton) (Lau 1992b, 152-30).²⁰ Both discourses can be rendered in vastly different translations, particularly the meanings of *xie* 邪 and *yin* 淫, which have been taken to indicate Confucius’ moral judgement on the *Odes*. These notions will be examined more closely in Chapter 5.

Another key hermeneutic concept regarding the *Odes* is *xing* 興 apart from what Confucius has mentioned above as one of the functions of poetry. It is said in “Chunguan zongbo” of the *Zhou Li* 周禮·春官宗伯:

大師：教六詩，曰風，曰賦，曰比，曰興，曰雅，曰頌。(Lau 1993, 42)

The Director of Music: teaches the six genres of poetry, they are: *feng*, *fu*, *bi*, *xing*, *ya* and *Song*. (My translation)

Likewise in the “Great preface” *xing* is one of the six ‘classes’ of poetry:

故詩有六義焉，一曰風，二曰賦，三曰比，四曰興，五曰雅，六曰頌。

Thus it is that in the [Book of] Poems there are six classes: – first, the Fung [Feng]; second, descriptive pieces; third, metaphorical pieces; fourth, allusive pieces; fifth, the Ya; and the sixth, the Sung [Song]. (Legge 1994, 4:34)

The quotations from *Zhou Li* and the “Great preface” are bemusing. The “Feng”, “Ya” and “Song” are today recognized as the literary genres of the *Odes* as they appear in the received text whilst *fu* 賦, *bi* 比 and *xing* 興 generally refer to the

²⁰ Whether Confucius refers to the music or the lyrics is a matter to be discussed later.

methodology of poetry writing. These two passages have led scholars to believe that originally the *Shi* had six divisions but the *fu*, *bi* and *xing* poems had probably been merged during transmission or redaction with those of *feng*, *ya* and *Song*. Jia Jinhua 賈晉華 traces the etymological origin of *xing* to be state funeral rites during which eulogistic dirges were intoned during the kings’ funerals, thus those dirges could appropriately be called *xing* poems. Jia asserts that from funerals in which emotions were evoked, *xing* has assumed the extended meaning of emotional motivation (2006, 192-6). As methods of poetry writing *xing* is an allusive piece, *fu* is a narrative piece whilst *bi* refers to metaphors (Legge 1994, 4:34]). Legge finds the distinction between *bi* and *xing* a little uneasy; likewise for Fang Yurun who has even ridiculed their differentiation as hair-splitting because their employment in poetic creation is often intertwined (1986, 2). Whilst these comments are most relevant, it is contemporary poet and critic Florence Chia-ying Yeh 葉嘉瑩 who spells out the difference: *bi* and *xing* represent two different relationships between imagery and emotion; *bi* is to mobilize the emotion formed in the heart/mind to engage imagery for representing that emotion (以心及物), whereas *xing* is to engage imagery to stimulate emotional responses in the heart/mind (以物及心) (1997, 255). Hence the collocation of *fu*, *bi* and *xing* with the “Fang”, “Ya” and “Song” implies that the compositional methods are also the criteria of the classification of the *Odes*. Yu Xing has traced the history of the exegetic typology of the *Odes* (2008, 7-17) and there seems to be no consensus among scholars on whether they should be read as purely literary taxonomy or methods of poetic composition. In tracing the notion of *xing* Ye Shuxian observes that it was originally meant to be narrations from which songs and dances were motivated, but the passions of such ritual practices had later been rationalized and developed into poetic allusions and then modes of cognitive reasoning (1996, 428).

Whilst Mencius preaches his hermeneutic principles for interpreting texts in general, for him the rules are “more honor’d in the breach than the observance”.²¹ When Mencius quotes a text to illustrate a point he often takes its meaning out of context, rather than adhering to the meaning as intended by the author. He justifies his interpretive liberalism by saying that not everything said in a text is credible.²²

²¹ Coining Shakespeare, see *Hamlet* Act 1, scene 4, 7–16.

²² See 孟子·盡心下: “盡信書，則不如無書。” Mencius 7.B.3 (Lau 2003, 310-1)

De-contextualization, as Huang Junjie concludes, is a typical interpretive practice during the pre-Qin era (2008, 179-80). Huang further observes that this is more a situation of ‘using’ text than ‘mentioning’ text. The former recites text to support an argument; the latter treats the text as the subject of study (2008, 166). Van Zoeren has identified a number of hermeneutical twists in the *Analects* whereby the odes had been taken out of contexts for underpinning Confucian normative values (Van Zoeren 1991, 32-5). For instance, in the *Analects* 3.8 Zixia 子夏 (circa 507-? BCE) asks Confucius what is meant by the verses of the ode entitled “Shuoren” 碩人 (Ode 57) from the “Weifeng” 衛風, which reads:

巧笑倩兮	Her entrancing smile dimpling,
美目盼兮	Her beautiful eyes glancing,
素以為絢兮	Patterns of colour upon plain silk...

²³

The Master replied, “The plain silk comes first. The colour comes afterwards” (繪事後素), from which Zixia intuited the illation that the practice of rites likewise comes afterwards (禮後乎). Such an inference is taken entirely out of the context of the poem. Van Zoeren postulates that Zixia’s response, so obviously incoherent with the original question, could have been appended to the main discourse by later Confucian scribes. By complicating the original dialogue, value was added to Confucian teaching thus enhancing its competitiveness against other schools (Van Zoeren 1991, 32-3). Be that as it may, this illustrates that “以意逆志” is ambiguous: the phrase, if translated without grammatical inflections, could read ‘use meaning/sense encounter intent’. The immediate question is: whose intent? *Zhi* could mean the intent arising out of the interpreter’s subjectivity, as is Zixia’s response here, or that of the poet’s, which has nothing to do with rites.

The quest for authorial intent presupposes that text is inextricably intertwined with the author and that meaning is what the author puts into the text, a position which has a parallel in the West known as expressive realism. Though popular during the nineteenth century, expressive realism has been challenged by subsequent literary movements such as New Criticism, Structuralism and Post-structuralism. Among other things, exponents of New Critics contend that “the intentions of the author were not to be found outside the text in biographies or in history” (Belsey

²³ Van Zoeren quotes Waley’s translation in his book but I have chosen D. C. Lau’s rendition (2000, 21). Note that the original poem does not have the third line as it appears in the *Analects*.

1980, 15, 17). Structuralist (or more often referred to as Post-structuralist) Roland Barthes “has specifically proclaimed the death of the author” (Belsey 1980, 3). Barthes maintains that once a text enters the public domain, the author has no control over its meaning as it would be left to the interpretation of the reader (1988, 148). The reality is that not all writers will wear their hearts upon their sleeves, let alone their writings. Confucius has dissociated an author’s persona or character from his words.²⁴ In a similar vein but antedating Barthes’ theory by three centuries, Wang Fuzhi 王夫之 (1619-1692) asserts that although an author’s thought may tend towards a particular idea, readers may derive meaning according to what they feel (作者用一致之思，讀者各以其情而自得) (1866, 1-2). If the author’s thought can be described as *zhi* 志, then the readers’ *yi* 意 – the Mencian ‘tool’ for gaining understanding (以意逆志) – is, according to Wang, the readers’ feeling or emotion. The Qing poet Tan Xian 譚獻 (1832-1901) echoes Wang Fuzhi by stating that although an author’s intent may not mean it, that does not preclude readers from thinking that it is what the author meant (作者之用心未必然，而讀者之心何必不然) (1998, 19). Amidst the antithesis of interpretation theories, Russian philosopher and linguist Mikhail Bakhtin takes the middle ground. He asserts that meaning is to be found in the dialogic exchanges of language between the speaker and listener (or author and reader), thus resurrecting the author from Barthesian death but at the same time engaging the reader in the interpretation process (Honeycutt 1944, Chapter 3.3). Here Li Qingliang’s hermeneutical model of linguistic congruence between the interpreter and the interpreted is found resonating with Bakhtin.

5.2. Translation

Inter-linguistic translation found its place in Chinese history as far back as the Zhou times. Reported in the “Wang zhi” chapter of the *Liji* 禮記·王制 are the titles of the translation officers in the north, south, east and west of the realm²⁵ and from

²⁴ 論語·衛靈公：子曰：“君子不以言舉人，不以人廢言。” *Analects* 15.23: The Master said, “The gentleman does not recommend a man on account of what he says, neither does he dismiss what is said on account of the speaker.” (Lau 1992b, 154-5)

²⁵ “Huangji” of the *Liji* 禮記·王制：“… 五方之民，言語不通，嗜欲不同。達其志，通其欲：東方曰寄，南方曰象，西方曰狄鞮，北方曰譯。” In those five regions, the languages of the people were not mutually intelligible, and their likings and desires were different. To make what was in their minds apprehended, and to communicate their likings and desires, (there were officers) - in the

whose titlature the functions of translation can be surmised (Cheung 2009, 28). However, the Chinese political and scholarly traditions have never been too serious about inter-linguistic translations, as it is implied in the “Shenshi” chapter of the *Lüshi chunqiu* 呂氏春秋・慎勢.²⁶ From the second century onwards some translators of Buddhist literature attempted to theorize translation, but before that classical Chinese scholarship has nothing much to offer in the form of theories dealing with inter-lingual translations (Cheung 2006, 31). However, by way of commentaries the sutra translators have introduced aesthetic concepts of translation such as *bian* 辯 (eloquence), *hua* 華 (floweriness), *zhi* 質 (unhewn-ness), *ye* 野 (coarseness), *xin* 信 (trustworthiness), *ya* 雅 (elegance) and *da* 達 (faithfulness) (Cheung 2006, 54, 57-63). These concepts have since then been revered by Chinese scholars undertaking inter-linguistic translations.

On the other hand, Western theorists have been more methodical than merely theorizing aesthetic concepts of translation. They consider translations, be it inter-lingual or intra-lingual, to be the core of the hermeneutic process. According to Schleiermacher, inter-lingual translation is practised by either bringing the reader to the author or bringing the author to the reader (1813, 229). Walter Benjamin (1892-1940) argues that translation is possible depending on the translatability of the original: if the original is intended to be understood by the original readers, so too will the translation be in a foreign language (Jacobs 1999, 76). On the contrary French philosopher Paul Ricoeur (1913-2005) contends that because of the diversity of languages a foreign language is paradoxically untranslatable though it has always been practically translated. Ricoeur adds that translators are torn between faithfulness (to one language) and betrayal (of another language), but they will find solace in “linguistic hospitality” as a result of agonistic negotiations between two languages, resulting in some kind of predicament of “correspondence without adequate adhesion” (2006, 10, 14). Linguistic hospitality calls for the renunciation of translating an original text into a perfect replica, as no two languages are “exactly reducible the one to the other” (Kearney 2006, xvii). This is particularly true in the case of translating poetry. “Hence the vanity of translation,” so Shelley points out, “it

east, called transmitters; in the south, representationists; in the west, Di-dis; and in the north, interpreters. (Legge 1967, 1:229-30)

²⁶ “Shenshi” of the *Lüshi chunqiu* 呂氏春秋・慎勢: “凡冠帶之國，舟車之所通，不用象譯狄鞮，方三千里”，meaning a civilized nation like the Middle Kingdom (China) does not need translations or translators.

were as wise to cast a violet into a crucible that you might discover the formal principles of its colour and odour” (1923, 29). If Shelley’s violet alludes to the original poetic language to be translated, then the bottom line for its decoction, as far as Browning is prepared to defend literal fidelity in translation, is to go for it “at every cost save that of absolute violence to our [target] language” (1973, 293).

In his monograph *After Babel* George Steiner sums up the ‘theories’ of interlingual translation since the seventeenth century to be broadly falling within three modes. Firstly there is strict literalism favouring word-by-word matching of the source and target languages. The second involves faithful but autonomous restatement of the original that is rendered naturally in a foreign language. The third extends from transpositions of the original into a more accessible idiom to the freest allusive or parodistic echoes. The inescapable question is, however, to what degree should literal fidelity be attained? (1975, 253, 261) Benjamin considers it crucial for a translation to be as accurate as possible in form and meaning to the original, although it needs not be a perfect copy of it. This goal is achievable because languages are *a priori*; they are no stranger to one another (Rendall 1997, 155). Whilst Benjamin’s theorization of linguistic ‘kinship’ and ‘pure language’ is more philosophical than practical, his description of the translator’s task is inspiring: a translator should “find the intention toward the language into which the work is to be translated, on the basis of which an echo of the original can be awakened in it” (Rendall 1997, 159). Incidentally this serves as a reminder of Mencius’ hermeneutic principle of seeking authorial intent. Whatever translation method it is, the crux of the matter is a dichotomy between ‘letter’ and ‘spirit’, or ‘word’ and ‘sense’. In fact translation is always in pursuit of a theory, as Ricoeur observes, and after traversing the cultural and linguistic differences through texts and words, the translated text expresses itself in the construction of a glossary (2006, 35-7). After all, a ‘theory’ of translation must necessarily be a part of, or be linked to, theories of language. But after surveying the biological, neurochemical and historical aetiology of human speech, Steiner concedes that as next to nothing is known of the organization and storage of different languages when they co-exist in the same mind, there cannot be any ‘theory’ of translation in any rigorous sense of the term; there can only be ‘solutions’, for translation is not a science, but an exact art (1975, 293-5).

6. Methodology

As discussed previously, hermeneutics appears to be the most opportune of theoretical frameworks within which ancient texts can be interpreted and translated. This section will focus on formulating a hermeneutical methodology by which the distant and obscure texts of “Kongzi shilun” and *The Book of Odes* can be made intelligible. By intelligibility it is intended to be the meaning which is beyond the explicit or literal; but the ‘innermost dynamic’ that sheds light on what the author did not or could not say but is textually evident, as Heidegger has advocated. Such an approach would attempt to uncover the meaning ‘behind’ the text, but not ‘away from the text’ as ill-founded concoctions or conjectures. As a first step the palaeography of “Kongzi shilun” will have to be deciphered by considering various philological opinions which have been widely published. In determining the various possible meanings of a particular graph, preference will be given, where possible, to the then prevailing meaning during the Warring States period, as evidenced by their appearances in other pre-Qin, or the latest Han literature. This entails synchronic referencing with other known bamboo or silk texts and various ancient texts. Etymological dictionaries specializing in Warring States scripts and the *Shuowen jiezi*, one of the earliest Chinese etymological dictionaries, will also be consulted.

As for the interpretive process, Mencius’ hermeneutic principles of seeking authorial intent and knowing the authors and their times are problematic for the “Kongzi shilun” and the *Shijing*. Even if meaning resided in biographies and historical accounts, the authorship of both the manuscript and the *Odes* cannot be determined with any exactitude. As Fang Yurun has pointed out, it is impossible to know the authorial intent of the odes; only connections can be made thereto through textual analysis (1986, 3). This is not to say that circumstantial and historical evidence concerning “Kongzi shilun” is to be ignored; on the contrary the codicological issues of the manuscript will be the subject of inquiry because they form part of the Heideggerian ‘ideational preconceptions’ that one brings to understanding the text. As Boltz points out, before gaining an understanding of any early Chinese text, one should take into consideration the text’s physical and structural form, its relation to other early texts and its literate environment in which it

was produced (2007a, 50).²⁷ Despite this, there is a need for an alternative approach in order that interpretations of the primary texts could be freed from being cocooned by ideological clichés. “Kongzi shilun”, being a commentary on the *Odes*, warrants an interpretive strategy of reading the two texts synoptically, as the linguistic context of one would inform the other in such a way that meaning would emerge from their congruity. Rather than letting Confucian orthodoxy pre-empt textual meaning, it would be appropriate to let the texts ‘speak’ for themselves as if they were animate entities in order that the intellectuality of pre-Qin thinking could have the chance to reveal its true mien and lineament. However, this is not to discard the tradition of Confucianism out of hand. It will be treated as the subject matter of interrogation or doctrines to be validated by the primary texts and not preconceptions through which the primary texts are interpreted.

As previously noted in the Textual Variance section, Martin Kern claims that there are widespread textual variances after comparing, word for word, the odes cited in the Guodian, Mawangdui 馬王堆, Shuanggudui 雙古堆 manuscripts and “Kongzi shilun” against the *Maoshi* (2005, 156). He has raised the question of relying on the *Maoshi* text, its glosses and commentaries for interpreting “Kongzi shilun”, as he writes:

[A]s has now become clear from the textual variants and radically different readings in the manuscripts, the circular process of the Mao exegesis ruled deeply into the text itself. In addition to the “minor prefaces” that provided an overall meaning for each song, the Mao orthographic choices and its individual word glosses oftentimes provided the basis for this meaning, creating the impression of an original text from which the “minor prefaces” then seemed to merely extract the “original meaning.” (2007a, 791)

By way of evidence, Kern points out that in “Guanju” (Ode 1), the Mao-Zheng tradition glosses the binome 窈窕 as *youxian* 幽閒 (demure)²⁹ whereas in “Yuechu” 月出 (Ode143) *yaojiao* 窈糾, which is said to be the same as 窈窕, is glossed as ‘restive posture’ (舒之姿也). When the same verse of “Guanju” is quoted in the “*Wuxing*”, 窈窕 is written as *jiaoshao* 茝芍, which, Kern adds, means ‘sensual

²⁷ I subscribe to the principle of Boltz’s methodology but not the technicality of his deduction as detailed in his essay; the rationale of my disagreement is outside the scope this thesis.

²⁹ Kern interprets 幽閒 as “pure and secluded” (2007a, 784) and Legge “modest, retiring, virtuous” (1994, 1); neither is considered a satisfactory rendition of the term. “Demure” here is used without the negative connotation of pretentiousness that it sometimes carries.

pleasure' as it is understood in "Shangui" 山鬼 (Mountain God) of the *Chu ci* 楚辭. The Mao-Zheng tradition interprets "Guanju" as a song about the virtue of the queen, but "Yuechu", fondness of sex. In other words, the Mao commentary treats the same term in one poem as a description of female morality and another, female allure (2007a, 781-2). Kern Further suggests:

We cannot reject the Mao "minor prefaces" while at the same time accepting the words of the Mao text ... a text constructed through a particular interpretation. This problem, as it happens, has already plagued the Song critics of the Mao tradition, who, lacking any alternative, had to use the Mao text to argue against the Mao interpretation. (2007a, 792)

Kern's arguments are at worst unsound and at best an overstatement, to say the least of being self-contradictory, as can be seen in the ensuing discussions. The 'problem' that Kern has raised involves three aspects: (1) textual variances and the orthography of the *Maoshi* text, (2) word glosses and (3) interpretation of the poems of the Mao-Zheng recension. According to Kern, "Kongzi shilun" has quoted 64 characters from the Mao *Odes* with 26 variants (40.6%), not counting four omissions of the particles from the verses (2005, 156). However, the statistics have to be interpreted in light of the details and then the overall situation. Firstly, the variants include homophonophoric (*xiesheng* 諧聲) characters which are unlikely to change the intended meaning of the characters substituted. As Kern has pointed out from the outset, his study does not concern interpretive issues and no lexical or graphical distinctions of these variants are made. If *xiesheng* variants are excluded, textual variations are relatively few (2005, 159; 167). On closer examination of these non-*xiesheng* variants (affecting six verses), only two are found to have different meanings whilst the rest are considered insignificant (2005, 167-9).³⁰ Kern also came to the conclusion that the variants among the ancient manuscripts do not represent lexical variations, otherwise "we would expect to see a number of them being phonetically distinct" (2003, 45). As far as variations among the four lineages of *Shi* are concerned, Kern observes that "the Odes circulated in highly stable wording (i.e. orally stable – my emphasis) already in the late 4th century BCE" (2003, 46). Thus the overall problem is more or less confined to orthography. But Ma Ruichen did not

³⁰ Of significance are the bamboo texts "襄尔禀惠" (slip 7) and "四矢夏" (slip 22) which will be dealt with in the later chapters. The other variants can either be attributed to copying errors or the omission/use of different final particles.

regard this as problematic, as he rightly asserts that the *Maoshi*, being written in *guwen* 古文 (old text), tended to use *jiajiezi* 假借字 (loan characters) whilst the Qi, Lu and Han schools, being written in *jinwen* 今文 (modern text), tended to use *zhengzi* 正字 (orthodox characters). Thus “by first clarifying what the loan characters are then the meaning of the poems will be clear” (說詩者必先通其假借，而經義始明) (1989, 23).

Another of Kern’s concern is that the *Maoshi* text was constructed through a particular interpretation but this is exactly what his examples of “Guanju” and “Yuechu” cannot prove. If the Mao-Zheng commentary glosses 窈窕 as ‘demure’ and 窈糾 as ‘restive posture’,³¹ then they can be considered as describing different shades of a similar kind of female temperament. Interpreting 窈窕, 窈糾 and 芰芻 as suggestive of voluptuousness is simply subjective interpretation or contextualization; this meaning is not explicitly evident from the poetic texts. That “Guanju” is a panegyric on female virtue and “Yuechu” a quip about female allure testifies the fact that the *Maoshi* texts were not tendentiously constructed. If it were, how can the same term, similarly glossed in either context, yields interpretations of diametrically opposite effects? Furthermore, Kern has produced no evidence that any words, verses or stanzas of the *feng* odes vouch for the reading of the kings’ and consorts’ virtues and depravity; in fact there is none. Mingdong Gu’s survey reveals that throughout Chinese literary history, at least eight major interpretations of “Guanju” can be identified, with numerous twists to the main views, which are not always compatible with one another. Gu recognizes this phenomenon as the “hermeneutic openness” of the *Odes*, particularly the *feng* odes (2005, 156-8), so does Kern (2003, 60; 2010, 40-1). But hermeneutic openness and textual tendentiousness are contradiction in terms and this is where Kern’s views are self-contradictory. There is no evidence that the Mao orthographic choices are the results of its exegetical bias. In fact the glossary of a word or a term does not necessarily inform the interpretation of a poem in the Mao-Zheng commentaries, most of which are far-fetched conjectures of historical reading instead of textually based interpretations. Thus the *Maoshi* text can be read independently of the Mao-Zheng commentaries.

Kern is also sceptical about the Song scholars who, having no alternative text, had to use the Mao text to argue against the Mao interpretation. Using a different text

³¹ Ma Ruichen simply glosses 窈窕 and 窈糾 as ‘good’ or ‘beautiful’ (1989, 31, 417)

to argue about interpretive issues is unsound methodology, as the target of criticism is not the same. Zhu Xi's exegesis of the *Shijing* has not broken through the "square" of moralistic reading not because of textual integrity of the *Maoshi* but because he intends to reconcile the depraved poems with the teachings of the sages. One might quibble with Wen Yiduo's sensual reading of the *Odes*, but the fact is that he was able to argue against the Mao-Zheng commentaries by reading the same Mao text, so are many other commentators. In Stephen Owen's words: "Poetry lives not only by gloss and orthodox explanation, it lives also by tacit presumption, by implicit ways of knowing, by unstated anxieties." (1985, 4) After all, Kern admits that "after the third century, no reader could avoid the *Mao Odes* – including the tendentious glosses – as the base text of the ancient *Odes*." (2007b, 142) After all, there is no alternative but to adopt the *Maoshi* as the primary text for the study of "Kongzi shilun". But To err on the side of caution, the interpretation of *Maoshi* and the inquiry into "Kongzi shilun" will have to take into consideration possible pitfalls of the extant texts, and judiciously disregard the Mao glosses and commentaries, as will be demonstrated in this thesis. In the face of possible textual variances it is also instructive to recall Mencius' hermeneutic principle: "one should not allow the words to get in the way of the sentence."³²

As far as the translation of "Kongzi shilun" into English is concerned, no single methodology can seriously lay claim to any theories, for as Steiner has explained, translation defies theorization. However the 'solution' for translating the archaic manuscript into English will be one which will attempt to negotiate adherence to the source language and correspondence to the target language, striving to maintain a balance between the preservation of literary fidelity to the Chinese and the avoidance of linguistic violence to the English. Following Ricoeur's suggestion, I will supplement the translation with annotations which will discuss the different interpretive options. In all circumstances, I will strive to maintain the time-honoured aesthetic principles of translation of *xin* 信, *ya* 雅 and *da* 達.

In 2001 the Shanghai Museum and Shanghai guji chubanshe 上海古籍出版社 published the manuscripts of the bamboo corpus in a series of monographs entitled *The Shanghai Bowuguan cang Zhanguo Chu zhushu* 上海博物館藏戰國楚竹書 (the Chu bamboo slips of the Warring States period collected by the Shanghai

³² See footnote 15.

Museum). The manuscript, now designated 孔子詩論 “Kongzi shilun”, has been published in Volume 1 which contains exquisite photographic images of the bamboo slips in enlarged formats, which are accompanied by annotations and transcriptions of the archaic text. This publication will be the first primary text for this research.

The study of “Kongzi shilun” cannot be undertaken in isolation from the *Shijing*. As argued earlier, the *Shi* corpora existent at the time of the composition of “Kongzi shilun” and the received *Maoshi* would not be as different as a hawk from a handsaw. To this end volume 4 of James Legge’s series – *The Chinese Classics* – will be used. A caveat is considered to be in order here: the underlying assumption for this research is that the recension of the *Odes* as transmitted has been reasonably stable since the time of the manuscript.

7. Overview

This thesis, comprising six chapters presented in four parts, aims at staging a comprehensive textual study, translation and critical review of “Kongzi shilun”. Chapter 1 of Part A traces the discovery and authentication of the bamboo corpus of which “Kongzi shilun” forms part. It also introduces the *Shijing* and its commentarial tradition, followed by a literature review of related researches. The knowledge gap that this study endeavours to bridge is identified before discussing the research theoretical framework and methodology. Chapter 2 addresses the patent features and the codicological issues of authorship, date, denomination, theme and textual reconstruction of the unstable primary text. A transcription of the ancient graphs into contemporary Chinese and a translation of the same into English will be presented before this chapter closes. Part B contains one chapter, Chapter 3, which is dedicated to the textual study of the manuscript by ‘flashing back’ to the review of the literature in detail that has produced the transcription and translation in the first place. The translation will be supplemented by annotations explaining the rationale of interpretation and translation. Part C presents a critical study of “Kongzi shilun” in two chapters. Grounding on Confucius’ interpretation of the poems as elucidated in Part B, Chapter 4 attempts to reveal the implicit meanings of five poems, chosen as examples to illustrate how “Kongzi shilun” can enhance current understanding of the odes. Drawing on the manuscript’s interpretations of the poems discussed in the previous two chapters, Chapter 5 will delineate the notion of *qing* as the dominant

critical perspective of the manuscript and will review its didactic import in light of the pre-Qin and Han commentarial tradition. Part D, being the conclusion, will summarize in Chapter 6 the findings, arguments and deductions of this research as well as reflecting on its limitation and possible future research tasks.

Chapter 2 “Kongzi shilun” 孔子詩論

It is one of those cases in which if you are not confused you do not understand the problem.

– Richard Hallock
Persepolis Fortification Tablets

As discussed in the previous chapter, the discovery of “Kongzi shilun”, which, until now, has no parallel received text, has provided new source material for the study of *The Book of Odes*. However, the study of the manuscript is fraught with challenges as its origin, authorship, date of composition and other contextual details cannot be precisely determined. It does not even have a stable text as the bamboo slips were a dishevelled heap, caused by the binding strings not being able to survive the passage of time. They are akin to the loose leaves of a book without page numbers whose order, and thus contents, have to be reconstructed. The situation is exacerbated by the fact that only one of the twenty-nine bamboo slips is intact whilst the rest have suffered varying degrees of damage. Worst still is the fact that some slips are missing. The lacunae, which have yet to be resolved and which could frustrate efforts to restore the original text, are all the more reason for earnest research work. However, in these circumstances one ought to be cautious when drawing any unequivocal conclusions about the manuscript or making sweeping statements on its textual meaning. It is with this overriding consideration that the interpretation and translation of the manuscript are undertaken in this study. As noted in the previous chapter, Boltz’s methodology of investigating into the physical and structural forms of ancient texts is a convenient starting point for gaining an understanding of the manuscript. This chapter will be devoted to addressing the codicological issues such as authorship, date of compilation, scholastic heritage,

denomination, theme and textual reconstruction pertaining to “Kongzi shilun”. The original text will be reproduced first according to the order of the bamboo slips as arranged by Ma Chengyuan the pioneer exegete. Different scholarly opinions on other possible arrangements will be considered before adopting one version as the basis of translation.

1. The Bamboo Slips

The twenty-nine bamboo slips³³ of “Kongzi shilun” come in different lengths, the longest of which measures 55.5 cm, the shortest (broken) 9.3 cm, with various lengths in between. The average width of the slips is about 0.6 cm and thicknesses vary from 0.1 to 0.13 cm (Cao Jianguo 2010, 79-82). According to Chen Xiejun 陳燮君, on the right hand side of each slip are three notches each serrated at some distance from the tip, at the middle and near the end, all for the purpose of accommodating the small knots of the strings that were supposed to bind the slips together (2001, 3).³⁴ For ease of identification the slips are numbered from 1 to 29 by the Shanghai Museum. All past studies of the manuscript have followed this numbering system, and this thesis is no exception.

Of the entire cache, slip 2 appears to be the only slip intact and its full length of 55.5 cm would indicate the original length of the other slips. Wang Guowei’s 王國維(1877-1927) pioneering research in the last century reveals that ancient bamboo or wood manuscripts conform to a certain length convention (2004, 14). As more bamboo slips have been discovered since Wang’s time, Hu Pingsheng 胡平生 is able to assert that generally, the length of bamboo slips is relative to the importance of the manuscript and broadly there are five sizes for the different genre of tomes. The slip length of “Kongzi shilun”, namely 55.5 cm, is equivalent to the Warring States measurement of two *chi* 尺 (feet) and four *cun* 寸 (inches) and is among the longest of Chu bamboo tomes discovered so far.³⁵ The next size is about two *chi*, or 45 cm,

³³ According to Liao Mingchun two slips, no. 30 and 31 have been excluded from “Kongzi shilun” by reason of their different styles of calligraphy (2003, 2).

³⁴ Unfortunately these features are not clearly shown in the photographs of the bamboo slips. Only by close examination of the actual slips can some of them be seen. However, as they are kept in the acrylic boxes their dimensions cannot be verified.

³⁵ Other genres of Chu bamboo texts, such as judicial records measure from 55 to 67 cm; divinations and burial gift lists extend to 75 cm. Slip lengths, in the latter case, have more to do with the social status of the buried (Hu 2004, 14-5).

followed by lengths of one *chi* four *cun*, or 32 cm (which is the length of the “Wuxing” slips of the Guodian corpus) and so on (2004, 27-9). Thus it can be safely assumed that “Kongzi shilun” was highly treasured at least by its late owner, if not generally regarded as an important text during its time and in the geographical area in which it had been circulating.

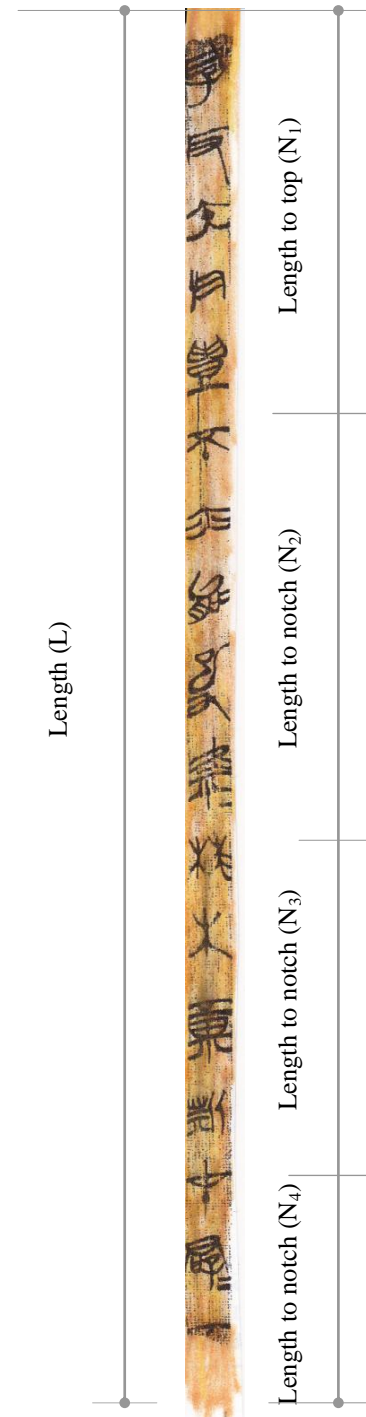
As far as the bamboo text is concerned, in neatly executed calligraphy characters spaced at about 1 cm have been fully inscribed on the slips except slips 2 to 7, which only contain texts between the top and bottom notches, as if the text is ‘indented’ (vertically) from the body of the main text. Collectively these are dubbed *liubaijian* 留白簡 or ‘partially inscribed slips’ by researchers, as opposed to those *manxiejian* 滿寫簡 or ‘fully inscribed slips’ making up the rest of the manuscript. If the slips are likened to the pages of a book, then their physical features, particularly the group of *liubaijian* might provide important clues to their original sequence and in turn, the coherence of the text. This question will be looked at more closely later.

For ease of reference the physical features of the bamboo slips are summarized in the following table (Cao 2010, 79-82):³⁶

³⁶ Adopted with modifications and reference to descriptions published by the Shanghai Museum (Ma 2001, 123-59). The image of the bamboo slip has been configured for illustration purposes only

Table 1 – Physical Features of the Bamboo Slips

C *= number of characters written on a slip

Slip No.	L x W cm	N ₁ cm	N ₂ cm	N ₃ cm	N ₄ cm	C*	Remarks	Legend (Not to scale)
1	22.1 x 0.6	-	17.1	5.0	-	23	Tip and end broken	
2	55.5 x 0.6	8.7	19.2	19.5	8.1	38	Intact, N ₁ and N ₄ blank	
3	51 x 0.6	4.9	19.1	19.2	7.8	40	Tip and end broken, N ₁	
4	46.1 x 0.6	7.3	19.2	19.5	0.1	43	Tip and end broken, N ₁	
5	47.5 x 0.6	8.5	19.3	19.6	0.1	38	Tip intact, end broken,	
6	49.5 x 0.6	0.7	19.7	20.4	8.7	43	Tip broken, end intact, N ₁	
7	42 x 0.6	-	16.9	19.6	5.5	40	Tip and end broken, N ₁	
8	52.4 x 0.6	8.8	19.2	19.4	5	53	Tip intact, end broken	
9	53.8 x 0.6	8.7	19.2	19.4	6.5	57	Tip intact, end broken	
10	46 x 0.6	8.4	19.1	18.5	-	46	Tip intact, end broken	
11	38.1 x 0.6	-	10.3	19.2	8.6	38	Tip broken, end intact	
12	18.5 x 0.6	-	18.5	-	-	18	Tip and end broken	
13	23.7 x 0.6	7.3	16.4	-	-	24	Tip and end broken	
14	24.5 x 0.6	8.7	16.8	-	-	23	Tip and end broken	
15	18.3 x 0.6	0.1	18.3	-	-	18	Tip and end broken	
16	47.8 x 0.6	0.7	19.2	19.4	8.5	50	Tip broken, end intact	
17	24.1 x 0.6	-	8.5	15.6	-	28	Tip and end broken	
18	18.6 x 0.6	-	-	18	0.6	19	Tip and end broken	
19	21.3 x 0.6	1.3	19.3	1	-	21	Tip and end broken	
20	44.3 x 0.6	6.4	19.2	18.7	-	44	Tip and end broken	
21	47.6 x 0.6	8.7	19.3	19.5	0.1	49	Tip intact, end broken	
22	38.4 x 0.6 9.3	0.7	19.3	18.4	0.7	42	Upper half broken	
23	27.7 x 0.6	-	0.1	19.2	8.4	26	Tip broken, end intact	
24	53.8 x 0.6	8.6	19.2	19.4	6.6	54	Tip intact, end broken	
25	20 x 0.6	-	0.1	19.5	0.1	22	Tip and end broken	
26	23.4 x 0.6	4	19.3	0.1	-	22	Tip and end broken	
27	43 x 0.6	5.4	19.2	18.4	-	42	Tip and end broken	
28	20.3 x 0.6	0.7	19.2	-	-	16	Tip and end broken	
29	18.7 x 0.6	-	18.4	-	-	18	Tip and end broken	

2. Authorship and Date

When “Kongzi shilun” was first published in 2001 the anonymity of its authorship generated much interest and speculation. Appearing six times within the text is the introductory expression “𠄎𠄎”, meaning “𠄎 says”. Obviously the identification of 𠄎 would go a long way to resolving the mystery of authorship and would shed light on the content of the manuscript. Philologists have agreed that the graph is a form of *hewen* 合文 (word combination) akin to portmanteauism in English (for instance ‘brunch’ is ‘breakfast’ and ‘lunch’ combined). The ‘=’ mark that appears on the lower right hand side of the graph is commonly found in Chu texts denoting word combination. It would appear that 𠄎 is made up of the modern Chinese characters of 子 on the left and 卜 or 上 on the right. Thus the initial reading of 𠄎 by scholars such as Qiu Xigui and Jiang Linchang was Bu Zi 卜子 (Master Bu Shang 卜商, alias Zixia), who was a disciple of Confucius known for his outstanding scholarship in poetry. Huang Xiquan 黃錫全, on the other hand, traced it to ‘Zishang 子上’ who was Confucius’ great grandson (quoted in Chi 2004, 6); thence the postulation that the author of the manuscript could be Zixia or Zishang. However, Xu Zhengying contends that according to the convention of word combination of Chu scripts, the graphs to be combined must share a common radical (for instance the radical 子), in which case neither Zishang nor Bu Zi as word combination satisfies the rule. Thus 𠄎 should not be read as Zishang or Bu Zi (2004, 77).

According to Liao Mingchun, another possible author of the manuscript is Zigao 子羔 (Gao Chai 高柴, 521-? BCE, one of Confucius’ disciples), claiming that the manuscript could be part of a larger manuscript known as “Zigao” of the *Shangbo* corpus (2004a, 24). Li Ling also holds the same view having regard to their uniform calligraphic style and the physical features of the bamboo slips, but he has not speculated on the question of authorship (2002, 13).

Cao Jianguo argues that the manuscript bears the hallmark of the thoughts of Ziyou 子游 (Yan Yan 言偃 506-? BCE, one of Confucius’ inner circle of followers); at least part of it could have been written by him (2010, 168).

It was Ma Chengyuan who points out that 𠄎 is portmanteauism for ‘Confucius’ 孔子, citing evidence from other bamboo texts within the same corpus (2001, 124). He Linyi further asserts that the ancient graph of 孔 was written as 𠄎

according to the phonetic dictionary of ancient texts, the *Guwen sishengyun* 古文四聲韻 (2002, 244). Thus the reading of “𠂔” as 孔子 meets the convention of having the separate graphs sharing a common radical (i.e. 子). The assertion of Ma and He has since then been widely accepted in academia. It is also significant for an obvious reason: the manuscript is found to have recorded Confucius’ direct quotes commenting on the *Shi*. This means that the manuscript can be safely classified as Confucian text in view of the fact that during pre-imperial times *Shi* pedagogic was not a monopoly of the Ru 儒家 (Huang Renner 2004, 84).³⁷ Ma claims that Confucius was the author of the manuscript thence his decision to name it “Kongzi shilun” 孔子詩論. Despite disagreement in some academic quarters the title has nonetheless gained currency. However Ma’s proposition of Confucius’ authorship remains questionable.

With all the trappings of scholastic celebrity Confucius, or any of his eminent followers, are prime candidates to whom attribution of the manuscript is a tempting enterprise. If Zixia were its author then the manuscript could be conveniently inducted into the *Maoshi* tradition, as it is the popular belief propounded by Lu Ji 陸璣 (of the Wu 吳 during the Three Kingdom period, circa third century) that the “Mao preface” was the work of Mao Heng 毛亨 and Mao Chang 毛萇 (both of the Former Han in the late third to early second centuries BCE), whose erudition can be retraced to Xunzi, Zixia and ultimately Confucius. Jiang Linchang even suggests that the manuscript could well be the legendary “Xia Preface” 夏序 to the *Shijing*, mentioned by the Tang scholar Lu Deming 陸德明 (550?-630) and the Song scholar Hong Mai 洪邁 (1123-1202) (2004, 13). Arguing against Zixia’s authorship is Cao Feng who asserts that Zixia has never been addressed as Buzi in any pre-Qin literature (Quoted in Hu Ying 2004, 22). Lu Shengjiang 盧盛江 and Wei Jing 魏靜 went further to prove this point: Zixia has been addressed only four times by the name Sheng 商 but 23 times as Zixia in the *Analects*, and overwhelmingly 186 times in most other pre-Qin and Han literature. On a few occasions he has been addressed as Bu Zixia 卜子夏 or Mr Bu 卜先生 but not Buzi (2006, 126-7). Alternatively, if the manuscript could be attributed to Zishang, then its scholarship could be safely

³⁷ The *Mozi* 墨子, *Hanfeizi* 韓非子, and *Guanzi* 管子 have quoted *shi* but not to the extent of Confucian texts.

assumed to be inherited from Zisi 子思 (Zishang’s father, Confucius’ grandson, 483-402 BCE), placing it neatly within the *Si-Meng* (Zisi and Mencius) school (思孟學派). As Cao Jianguo has observed, the author of the manuscript explicates the *Shi* from emotional and ritualistic perspectives, which are vastly different from the political interpretation of the Mao school (2010, 173). The probability of Confucius’ authorship can also be ruled out as he would have customarily used his given name ‘Qiu’ 丘³⁸ as the mode of self-address rather than his cognomen ‘Kong’ 孔 as in “*詩*”³⁹. The direct quotes from him appearing in the text do not necessarily confer authorship upon him, particularly when Confucius is a self-confessed transmitter rather than innovator.³⁹ In summation, there appears to be no internal textual evidence to suggest that the manuscript was indited by any of Confucius, Zixia, Zishang, Zigao or Ziyou.

Although the text does not reveal the authorial identity of the manuscript, scholars consider it possible to trace its scholastic lineage, which is discernible through analyses of its linguistic form, literary style and philosophical trajectory. Considering the linguistic style of the manuscript Liao Mingchun surmises that its author could be the students of Zigao, but unlikely to be Zigao himself (2004a, 24). Chen Li 陳立 notes that if it were written by Confucius’ immediate followers, they would have written ‘the Master says’ 子曰 rather than ‘Master Kong says’ 孔子曰; the former mode of address generally indicates a closer relationship with the Master than the latter, but, as Chen cautions, that could change during successive copying of the text by hand (2002, 69, also Huang Huaixin 2004, Preface 5). Cao Jianguo observes that in explicating the *Odes*, the manuscript advocates harnessing *qing* with *li*. This doctrinal stance is very similar to the core values espoused by Ziyou as recorded in “Tan Gong” of the *Liji* 禮記·檀弓. Furthermore, the manuscript displays similar linguistic styles to parts of the transmitted text of the *Kongcongzi* 孔叢子 (a work considered to be apocryphal but is increasingly recognized as authentic

³⁸ See “Gong Ye Chang”, “Shu Er”, “Xiang Dong”, “Xian Jin”, “Ji Shi”, and “Wei Zi” chapters of the *Analects*. 論語·公冶長, 述而, 鄉黨, 先進, 憲問, 季氏, 微子. Similar entries can be found in the *Zuozhuan* and *Liji*. Most convincingly, 詩 and Qiu referring to the same person appear in the bamboo texts of “Zigao” 子羔 and “Lubang dahan” 魯邦大旱 of the Shangbo corpus.

³⁹ See 論語·述而 *Analects* 7.1: The Master said, “I transmit but do not innovate” (子曰: “述而不作...”) (Lau 1992b, 56-7)

classical text).⁴⁰ Cao concludes that the manuscript should have been the work of the Ziyou School; he goes so far as to suggest that part of the manuscript could have proceeded from Ziyou’s hand (2010, 157-68). Be that as it may, Cao’s conclusion appears to have gone beyond what textual evidence can support as no direct link of Ziyou’s authorship can be established with the manuscript. Chen Li has observed that the manuscript reads more like lecture notes taken by students of Confucius’ followers who had, in elucidating poetry, quoted Confucius as the ultimate source of authority; as such the manuscript is different to the dialogic format of the *Analects* which records the questions and answers between Confucius and his disciples or other interlocutors (2002, 70). In essence, no concrete conclusion can be drawn specifically in respect of the scholastic lineage of the manuscript, but the postulation that it was written by a third or even fourth generation Confucian follower or followers appears to be tenable.⁴¹ The next question is: are Confucius’ quotations in the manuscript really the words of the historical Confucius? Since this cannot be confirmed or denied with substantive evidence one may have to be satisfied with the endophoric reference of the manuscript for the time being. However, it would be fair to say that “Kongzi shilun” represents the views of Confucius as perceived by the author(s) of the manuscript. Reference made to Confucius’ comments or words in this thesis is to be understood that they are a matter of attribution and may or may not be those of the historical Confucius.

Closely related to the question of authorship is the date when the text was indited which may be different to the date when the text was inscribed or copied on the bamboo slips. Chen Li observes that the graphs of the manuscript generally conform to the system of Chu scripts typically written on silk and bamboo slips of the mid-Warring States period, to which the manuscript could be relatively dated (i.e. about 300 BCE) (2002, 70) Ikeda Tomohisa argues that the ritualistic concepts evinced in “Kongzi shilun” is a result of the thorough understanding of Xunzi’s concepts of *li*, thus his conclusion that the manuscript was more or less coeval with the book of “The Great Compendium” of the *Xunzi* 荀子·大略 (2006, 390, 397).

⁴⁰ The *Kongcongzi* was attributed to Kong Fu 孔鮒 (circa 250 BCE), a distant grandson of Confucius. The work is widely believed to be forged by Wang Su 王肅 (195-256). The authenticity of *Kongcongzi* is outside the scope of the current inquiry, but Huang Huaixin’s research concludes that, despite historical inaccuracies found in the book, it could have been written by the distant grandsons of Confucius (Huang 1987, 36).

⁴¹ My postulation is supported by Chen Tongshen (2004, 36).

This postulation firstly presupposes that the *Xunzi* predates the manuscript and secondly the date of composition of the *Xunzi* is precisely known, none of which can be substantiated.⁴²

In Ma Chengyuan's views, a cross comparison between the Shangbo and Guodian corpora suggests that the former could be the sepulchral paraphernalia of a Chu aristocrat interred before the relocation of the state capital to Ying 郢, although there is no concrete evidence that the Shangbo corpus came from the same Guodian excavation (2001, 2). Although Ma's empirical assessment is relevant,⁴³ it has raised more questions than it has provided answers for dating the inditement of the text, as opposed to determining the vintage of the bamboo slips. Falkenhausen points out that “Ying was the generic name for any Chu capital, of which there were several during the Eastern Zhou period” (2007, 106). In fact Chu had moved her capital many times to different locations within present-day Hubei 湖北, Anhui 安徽 and Henan 河南 in a period of some 450 years (roughly within 690 to 241 BCE) (Sima, n.d., 100-2), but not all of them were called Ying. Some of the moves were massive mobilization for military campaigns.⁴⁴ Ma Chengyuan's conjecture could mean that the Shangbo corpus was possibly interred at Jiangling. By deduction, it could have been inscribed (as opposed to being indited) onto the bamboo slips not later than the 240s BCE. At the same time the interment could not have taken place earlier than the age of the bamboo material, estimated to be about 320 to 190 BCE⁴⁵ (again, it is noted that the text could have been composed at any time before or after the bamboo slips becoming available). On the other hand the inditement of the manuscript cannot antedate Confucius (551-479 BCE, whose quotations appear in the manuscript) and postdate the purported interment. On balance, having regard to the evidence available (albeit indirect), it is reasonable to assume that “Kongzi shilun” was written in circa

⁴² Neither Sima Qian nor Liu Xiang 劉向 (77-6 BCE), the first compiler of the *Xunzi*, and subsequently Yang Liang 楊倞 (circa 800 CE) are specific on the date of *Xunzi*'s writing. See the “Biographies of Mencius and Xunqin” of the *Shiji* 史記·孟子荀卿列傳 and Knoblock 1988, 1:106-12.

⁴³ Dating antiques by empirical evaluation is a widely accepted method for artifacts such as ceramics and is often preferred by experts because it is non-destructive or non-intrusive.

⁴⁴ “The Hereditary House of Chu” of the *Shiji* 史記·楚世家 recorded three moves of the Chu capital (Sima n.d., 100-2). The Tsinghua University bamboo text “Chuju” 清華簡·楚居 has recorded 31 moves of the capital to different places, 14 of which were named Ying (Wang Zijin 2011). Wang Guowei in his “Yeyu Chugongzhong ba” 夜雨楚公鐘跋 (Epilogue to the Yeyu Chugong bell) found one move not previously recorded in ‘official’ history.

⁴⁵ In an interview in 2002 Ma Chengyuan revealed that basing on scientific analyses, the Chinese Academy of Sciences has estimated that the age of the bamboo material is 2257 ± 65 years (Zhu Yuanqing 2002, 3). The age of the bamboo slips is thus calculated to be 320 to 190 BCE.

300 BCE, effectively placing it within the mid-to-late Warring States period, which is in line with what most commentators have estimated.

3. Denomination

As previously noted, the bamboo corpus in its original form consists of bamboo slips bound together by strings enabling it to be rolled up into scrolls. According to Pu Maozuo who quotes from Ma Chengyuan, the manuscript forms part of a scroll which exhibits the same calligraphic style that bears the title “*Zigao*” 子羔 written on the reverse side of one of the bamboo slips. The other parts of the scroll are later designated as the “*Zigao*” and “*Lubang dahan*” 魯邦大旱. The current title of the manuscript – “*Kongzi shilun*” 孔子詩論 – is not rubricated as such in the bamboo corpus but was designated by Ma Chengyuan (Pu 2002, 11, 48).

As discussed earlier, it is highly unlikely that Confucius was the author of the manuscript and the case seems to have been well argued. Thus some scholars consider it appropriate to drop the epithet ‘Kongzi’ from the title (Jiang Linchong 2004, 10-11). Appearing six times within the text is the introductory expression “Confucius said” 孔子曰 following which are words ascribed to Confucius. However, without the benefit of modern quotation marks, it is by no means clear where Confucius’ words stop and the author’s narration starts. If Confucius’ words comprise only a small proportion of the discourse then it would be misleading to name it “*Kongzi shilun*”. Chinese scholars have been trying to differentiate Confucius’ words from those of the author’s in the text. Without going into the details of their arguments, Ma Chengyuan considers the whole manuscript was authored by Confucius (2001, 131). Xu Zhengying claims that the entire manuscript contains Confucius’ words except a part written on slip 7 and the whole of slip 10 (2004, 80). Liao Mingchun asserts that the text contains long discourses of Confucius’ explication on the *Shi* after rearranging the order of the bamboo slips (2004a, 13-20). Jiang Linchang’s analysis, on the other hand, includes Confucius’ direct quotes as well as those which are akin to modern day free indirect speech⁴⁶ (2004, 5-10). Huang Huaixin asserts from linguistic and thematic perspectives that only short interjections in the text can be ascribed to Confucius (2004, 323-8).

⁴⁶ Simply put, free indirect speech is a literary style combining the voice of the third person narrator and that of the character in the narrative.

Following their analyses, the proportion of Confucius’ words as a percentage of the whole text can be calculated as follows:

Ma Chengyuan	100%
Xu Zhengying	94%
Liao Mingchun	44%
Jiang Linchang	28%
Huang Huaixin	19%

It should be noted that what is included or excluded as Confucius’ words is a matter of opinion and it very much depends on how the bamboo slips are sequenced. The percentages shown above are only a mechanical means to indicate a sense of proportion and should not be taken as absolute values. But if the extent of attributable content is the only criterion for denomination, then in view of the above findings it can hardly be concluded one way or another whether “Kongzi shilun” is an appropriate title. Xu Zhengying proposes that even if the manuscript was written by Confucius’ students it is Confucius’ commentary, or the enunciation of it, that has been recorded, thus in spirit the manuscript should still be proclaimed Confucius’ own. Xu cites pre-Qin literature such as the *Mozi* and the *Zhuangzi* which were not necessarily all written by the masters but are recensions adulterated with editorial input by their followers; yet, as such, these classics bearing the names of their masters have been accepted as proper titles (2004, 80).

Another concern raised by Chinese scholars is whether *lun* 論 is the appropriate word for the title of the manuscript. Jiang Guanghui suggests that it should be entitled “Shixu” 詩序 (quoted in Jiang Linchang 2004, 5). Zhu Yuanqing 朱淵清 prefers to call it “Shishuo” 詩說 as *shuo* is more in line with the exegetical tradition whereas *lun* denotes discursive discourses not commonly found until Han (2002, 137). Kern is in favour of calling it 詩說 or 詩教 “Shijiao” as he considers the manuscript to be a text book on poetry (2012, 17). As signifiers *lun* and *shuo* would at first sight appear to be synonymous but the *Shuowen jiezi* differentiates *lun* 論 as *yi* 議 (discuss), and *shuo* 說 as *shi* 釋 (explain). Jiang Linchang asserts that in the Spring and Autumn Period *lun* was either a genre of “archetypal critiques” (原始評論) or “edited anthology of discussions” (編輯匯總之議), but the manuscript is

neither archetypal (it builds upon what are believed to be the original comments of Confucius) nor anthological (2004, 10), thence Jiang considers it appropriate to name the manuscript “Shishuo”. Qiu Yuan’s 邱淵 research reveals that though the literary genre of *lun* was few and far between in the Spring and Autumn Period, *lun* can in fact be found later in Warring States literature such as “Tian Lun” 天論, “Li Lun” 禮論, “Yue Lun” 樂論 and “Zheng Lun” 正論⁴⁷ of the *Xunzi*, as well as “Liu Lun” 六論 in the *Lüshi Chunqiu*. By its very nature *lun* was to discuss, debate and articulate one’s viewpoints on certain topics. On the other hand, before the Spring and Autumn Period *shuo* was used to denote a pleasing dialogue but during the Warring States times it meant exegetical writings that serve to explain ancient texts, retaining the connotation of pleasing persuasion in which anecdotes and narratives of flowery dictions were found. Qiu admits that in classifying literary works the demarcation between the prosaic forms of *lun* and *shuo* can be fuzzy (2008, 172-4). A detailed analysis of “Kongzi shilun” would reveal that it is both exegetical and didactic: whilst it explains the meaning of the odes, it also enunciates the doctrines upon which interpretation is based.

Despite differences in opinion, “Kongzi shilun” has been generally accepted as the Chinese title of the manuscript and there appears to be no compelling reason to name it otherwise. However, the translation of the title into English encounters different issues that need to be considered. Anglophone sinologists, Csikszentmihalyi for one, have questioned the application of the term “Confucianism to some aspects of pre-modern China on the grounds that it mistakenly suggests a tradition that grew out of the foundational teachings of one person”. By extrapolation, the use of any of the grammatical forms of “Confucianism” is also called into question and in its stead, the word Ru 儒 is adopted. Csikszentmihalyi admits that such a move results in foregrounding historical accuracy at the expense of cultural clarity (2004, 15-8). Whilst Anglophone sinologists might find it necessary to distinguish the historical Confucius from the Ru school, Confucianism in Chinese, despite Lionel Jensen’s

⁴⁷ I have not looked into whether these books are originally entitled *lun* (thence Warring States nomenclature) or whether they are editorial initiatives by Liu Xiang (thence Han nomenclature). Knoblock is silent on this point but his mentioning of “embedded titles” of some of the books seems to suggest that book titles are original. Even if they are not, that Han erudites had adopted *lun* for Warring States literature would justify its current use on the manuscript.

post-modernist view (1997),⁴⁸ is traditionally recognized as *Ru Jia* 儒家 and is also a readily accepted synecdoche for Confucius.

In this thesis “Kongzi shilun” is translated as “Confucian Poetics”, rather than “Confucius’ Poetics” or “Ru Poetics”. Grammatically speaking, ‘Kongzi’ in this context is regarded as an attribute modifying ‘shilun’. “Confucian”, in the sense of the school of learning rather than Confucius the person, would avoid the question of Confucius’ authorship which “Confucius” would otherwise imply. Secondly, the need for historical accuracy notwithstanding, replacing ‘Confucian’ with ‘Ru’ would seem to go against conventional wisdom and would do little to improve one’s perception of the manuscript. Given the choice between ‘Confucian’ and ‘Ru’ as an epithet of the manuscript, a sense of cultural clarity afforded by the former is more desirable than the historical pedantry of the latter. The word ‘Poetics’ of the translated title is borrowed from Aristotle whose work *Poetics* is a treatise on Greek poetry. This adoption does not mean that the two works are in any way similar, for Greek and Chinese poetries are culturally specific in their own rights. ‘Poetics’ *sensu latissimo* embraces critical, exegetical, discursive and other facets of poetical studies, which are the subject matters of “Kongzi shilun”.

4. Outline and Theme

“Kongzi shilun” revolves around discussing the general nature of the *Odes* and more specifically elucidating a selection of poems. Central to this theme is its hermeneutical stance of interpreting poetry from the perspectives of *zhi* 智 (sagacity), *cheng* 誠 (sincerity), *li* 禮 (propriety), *tianming* 天命 (providence)⁴⁹ but most prominent of all *qing* 情 (emotions). A total of sixty odes have been mentioned in the discourse. Although some of the titles are unfamiliar, all except two, for which there is no received text, have been identified.⁵⁰ The following table shows the odes cited and their concordance with the received text:

⁴⁸ Jensen identifies nine other meanings of Ru in addition to “descent from Kongzi” (1997, 53). Some of these meanings appear far-fetched.

⁴⁹ Some may consider “providence” an incorrect translation of “天命” which has traditionally been translated as ‘what heaven ordains’ or ‘heaven’s mandate’ in pre-Qin literature. Conversely ‘heaven’ is not a satisfactory translation of 天.

⁵⁰ The number varies (so do the titles) depending on how the manuscript text is read, and whether the titles in Confucius’ times were different to the received text.

Table 2 – The Odes discussed in “Kongzi shilun”

Slip No.	Titles of the Odes			D. C. Lau's <i>Maoshi</i> Concordance ⁵¹
	Kongzi shilun	Received Text	Legge's Translation	
5	清 甍	清廟	Ts'ing mēaou	266
6	刺 旻	烈文	Lēe wăn	269
6	昊 = 又 城 命	昊天有成命	Haou T'ēen yēw ch'ing ming	271
7	大明	大明	Ta ming	236
7	皇矣*	皇矣	Hwang e	241
8	十月	十月之交	Shih yueh che kēaou	193
8	雨亡政	雨無正	Yu woo ching	194
8	即南山	節南山	Tsēeh nan shan	191
8	少 旻	小 旻	Sēaou min	195
8	少 翯	小 弁	Sēaou pwan	197
8	少 夏	小 宛	Sēaou yuen	196
8	考言	巧言	K'ēaou yen	198
8	伐木	伐木	Fah muh	165
9	天保	天保	T'ēen paou	166
9	諱父	祈父	K'e foo	185
9	黃 鵠	黃鳥**	Hwang nēaou	187
9	鵲 = 者 莪	菁菁者莪	Ts'ing-ts'ing chay go	176
9	裳 = 者 芋	裳裳者華	Shang-shang chay hwa	214
10	闡 疋	關 雎	Kwan ts'eu	1
10	棣 木	樛 木	Kēw muh	4
10	灘 圭	漢 廣	Han kwang	9
10	鵲 巢	鵲 巢	Ts'ēoh ch'au	12
10	甘 棠	甘 棠	Kan t'ang	16

⁵¹ D.C. Lau's concordance numbers of the Odes are the same as the Harvard Yenching Index.

Slip No.	Titles of the Odes			D. C. Lau's <i>Maoshi</i> Concordance
	Kongzi shilun	Received Text	Legge's Translation	
10	綠衣	綠衣	Luh e	27
10	鵲=	燕燕	Yen-yen	28
16	蓍 龜	葛覃	Koh t'an	2
17	東方未明	東方未明	Tung fang we ming	100
17	酒中	將仲子	Ts'ëang Chung-tsze	76
17	湯之水	揚之水**	Yang che shwuy	68
17	菜 蓏	采葛	Ts'ae koh	72
18	木 蒺	木瓜	Muh kwa	64
18	折杜	扶杜	Yëw te che too	169
21	贇大車	無將大車	Woo ts'ëangta keu	206
21	審 零	湛露	Chan loo	174
21	甸丘	宛丘	Yuen-k'ëw	136
21	於差	猗嗟	E tsëay	106
21	巨 鰲	鳴鳩	She këw	152
21	文王	文王	Wăn wang	235
23	麋 駒	鹿鳴	Luh ming	161
23	兔 盧	兔置	T'oo tseu	7
25	腸=	君子陽陽	Keun-tsze yang-yang	67
25	又兔	兔爰	T'oo yuen	70
25	大田	大田	Ta tën	212
25	少明	小明	Sëaou ming	207
26	北白舟	柏舟**	Pin chow	26
26	浴風	谷風**	Kuh fung	35
26	蓼莪	蓼莪	Luh go	202
26	陟又長楚	隰有萇楚	Shi yëw chang-ts'oo	148
27	可斯	何人斯***	Ho jin sze	199
27	七 衡	蟋蟀	Sih-tsuh	114

Slip No.	Titles of the Odes			D. C. Lau's <i>Maoshi</i> Concordance
	Kongzi shilun	Received Text	Legge's Translation	
27	中氏	螽斯***	Chung-sze	5
27	北風	北風	Pih fung	41
27	子立	子衿***	Tsze k'in	91
28	相鼠	相鼠***	Sëang shoo	52
28	牆又薺	牆有茨	Tsëng yëw ts'ze	46
28	青蠃	青蠅	Ts'ing ying	219
29	卷而	卷耳***	Keuen-urh	3
29	涉秦	褰裳	K'ëen chang	87
29	著	著***	Choo	98
29	角幡	角□[葛生]***	Koh sǎng	124
29	河水	河水***	N.A.	N.A.

1. Adopted with modifications from Ma Chengyuan 2001, 160-1; Chi Hsiu-sheng 2004, 3-5; Huang Renér 2004, 74-5; Legge 1994, 4:V-XIII; and D.C. Lau 1995, I-IX.
2. * denotes ode title extrapolated from the verses cited in the manuscript.
3. ** denotes more than one ode sharing the same title but the one considered to be the subject of critique is shown.
4. *** denotes possible ode titles but evidence for which is not conclusive.

The following table shows the divisions of the received text of the *Shijing* in which the poems mentioned in “Kongzi shilun” fall:

Table 3 – “Confucian Poetics” Coverage of *Shijing* Divisions

<i>Shijing</i> Divisions		Title	Slip No.
國風 Guofeng	周南 Zhou Nan	關雎、樛木、漢廣	10
		蠡斯#	27
		葛覃	16
		卷耳#	29
		兔置	23
	召南 Shao Nan	鵲巢、甘棠	10
	北風 Bei Feng	綠衣、燕燕	10
		谷風、柏舟	26
		北風	27
	邶風 Yong Feng	牆有茨、相鼠	28
	衛風 Wei Feng	木瓜	18
	王風 Wang Feng	君子陽陽、兔爰	25
		采葛	17
	鄭風 Zheng Feng	將仲子	17
		褰裳	29
		子衿#	27
	齊風 Qi Feng	東方未明	17
		猗嗟	21
		著	29
	唐風 Tang Feng	楊之水	17
		蟋蟀	27
		葛生	29
	陳風 Chen Feng	宛丘	22
	檜風 Gui Feng	隰有萇楚	26
	曹風 Cao Feng	鳴鳩	21
小雅 Xiaoya	鹿鳴之什 Lu Ming Zhi Shi	鹿鳴	23
		杕杜	18
		伐木	8
		天保	9
	白華之什 Bai Hua Zhi Shi	湛露	21
	彤弓之什 Tong Gong Zhi Shi	菁菁者莪	9
	祈父之什 Qi Fu Zhi Shi	祈父	9
		黃鳥	9
		節南山	8
		十月之交	8
		雨無正	8
	小旻之什 Xiao Wen Zhi Shi	小旻、小弁、小宛、巧言	8
		谷風、蓼莪	26
		何人斯#	27
	北山之什 Bei Shan Zhi Shi	無將大車	21
		小明、大田	25
		裳裳者華	9
		青蠅	28
	桑扈之什 Sang Hu Zhi Shi	文王、大明、皇矣	7
大雅 Da ya	文王之什 Wen Wang Zhi Shi	清廟	5/6
頌 Song	清廟之什 Qin Meao Shi Shi	烈文、昊天有成命	6

denotes possible ode titles but evidence for which is not conclusive.

According to Huang Ren'er, titles of pre-Qin literature were mostly created by later scribes. The fact that the titles of the odes mentioned in “Confucian Poetics” are largely consistent with those of the received text indicates that since Confucius’ times poem titles have been rather stable, though minor discrepancies may have occurred during subsequent transmission or transcription (2004, 84).

It is a matter of opinion whether “Kongzi shilun” is a collection of lecture notes or a formal essay on the *Odes*. As mentioned previously the text is unstable, thus textual meaning and structure depend on how the bamboo slips are arranged. Chen Li is in favour of treating it as lecture notes (2002, 70). Li Xueqin holds that the manuscript evinces well-structured arguments with articulate themes and motifs. In view of its unique rhetorical style Kern suggests that the manuscript is not a critical essay but a pedagogic text on *shi* interpretation and usage. Its readers could have been those who were conversant with the poems, and for whom the manuscript served to clarify unstable interpretations. Kern further observes that “Kongzi shilun” has neglected the aesthetics of poetry but focused on the effect of poetic meaning in specific circumstances (2012, 17-8, 20). This is probably an unfair question to ask of the manuscript because aesthetics and literature as we know them have not been conceptualized then.⁵² As noted earlier in “Yu” of “Xiang Zhuan” in *The Book of Changes* literary aesthetics has yet to have any place in the realms of natural and ancestral worship. Secondly, as Kern later admits, Confucius’ comments have not suggested any specific circumstances of application which would affect poetic meaning (2012, 24). In any case, the divergent views on the essence of “Kongzi shilun” are hardly surprising as the unstable text can be re-modelled into different formats by re-shuffling the bamboo slips. Despite this, the manuscript comprises distinct discursive blocks⁵³ each focusing on different motifs. Slips 1 to 3 and part of 4 are an overview on the *Shi* in general and the “Feng”, “Ya” and “Song” divisions in particular. The rest of the bamboo slips explicate the odes individually and in groups. A detailed study of the commentary is the subject of Part B.

⁵² My understanding of Kern’s view here is based on the Chinese text translated from English. I have not had the opportunity to sight the original essay. On the other hand the lack of literary or aesthetic theorization then does not mean that the manuscript cannot be subjected to a literary critical review today.

⁵³ I have avoided using terms such as ‘introduction’ or ‘conclusion’ to describe the structure of the manuscript as it presupposes that the bamboo slips can be so arranged. Although the reconstructed text adopted in this thesis lends itself to such a structure it would be prudent to treat them as discursive blocks, each with its motif and can be interpreted on its own merit.

5. Textual Reconstruction

The following table shows the transcribed text of “Confucian Poetics” in modern Chinese graphic forms as published by the Shanghai Museum. However, many of these graphs cannot be found in the contemporary vocabulary thus a further transcription of them into words of current usage will be necessary. The transcription shown below follows the order of the bamboo slips as assigned by Ma Chengyuan (2001, 123-59). As a precursor of a more detailed study in the next chapter, this textual review will not deal with the philological arguments or justifications for the archaic graphs as read. These issues will be dealt with in the next chapter which will consider alternative readings of the graphs and the text. Photographic images of the bamboo slips bearing the original Chu scripts are shown in Appendix A.

Table 4 – Transcription of “Kongzi shilun”

Slip No.	Transcription
1	行此者丌又不王 唐一孔=曰訾亡 隱志樂亡 隱情旻亡 隱言
2	寺也文王受命矣■訟坪惠也多言 遂丌樂安而 犀丌訶紳而 茅■丌 思深而遠至矣■大顯盛惠也多言
3	也多言難而 惠退者也衰矣少矣邦風丌內物也 尊儻人谷安大會 材安丌言旻丌聖善孔=曰佳能夫
4	曰詩丌猷坪門■與戔民而饒之丌甬心也 牖可女曰邦風氏也■民 之又懃卷也卡=之不和者丌甬心也 牖可女
5	氏也又城工者可女曰訟氏也一清甬王惠也■至矣敬宗甬之豐 呂 為丌沓秉旻之惠呂為丌黹■肅售
6	多士秉旻之惠 虔敬之刺旻曰乍競佳人不 曷佳惠於 唐前王不忘 虔斂之昊=又城命二后受之貴 獻曷矣訟
7	襄尔累惠害城胃之也又命自天命此文王城命之也■信矣■孔= 曰此命也夫■文王佳谷已 尋唐此命也
8	十月善諱言■雨亡政■即南山皆言上之衰也王公恥之少旻多 忝=言不中志者也少 翦丌言不亞少又 恚安少 叟考言則言 謹人 之害也■伐木
9	實咎於其也■天保丌 尋条 菴薑矣 巽 曷惠古也■諄父之 賾亦又 呂 也■黃 駟則困而谷反丌古也多恥者丌忍之 唐 鑄=者 莪則 呂人 噬 也 裳=者 芋則







Slip No.	Transcription
10	闡疋之改■棣木之皆■灘圭之智■鰭櫟之邇■甘棠之保■綠衣之思鷄之情■害曰童而皆馭於疋初者也■闡疋呂色俞於豐
11	青蠅也■闡疋之改則疋思鷄矣■棣木之皆則呂其彖也■灘圭之智則智不可尋也■鰭櫟之邇則僮者
12	好反內於豐不亦能改虐■棣木福斯才羣=不
13	可尋不彖不可能不亦智互虐■鰭櫟出呂百兩不亦又僮虐■甘
14	兩矣■疋四章則俞矣■呂鑿砬之斂忿好色之悉呂鐘鼓之樂
15	及疋人敬蠅疋壹其保厚矣■甘棠之蠅呂邵公
16	邵公也■綠衣之惠思古人也■鰭=之情呂疋蜀也■孔=曰虐呂蕃勳尋氏初之詩民嘗古然■見疋荒必谷反一本夫蕃之見訶也則
17	東方未明又利訶■牖中之言不可不韋也■湯之水疋悉婦愁■菜菔之悉婦
18	因木菰之保呂俞其憲者也折杜則情憲疋至也■
19	蠅志既曰天也猷又憲言■木菰又寢悉而未尋達也■交
20	番帛之不可迭也■民嘗古然疋隱志必又呂俞也■疋言又所載而后內或前之而后交人不可隼也虐呂折杜尋雀
21	貴也贊大車之囂也則呂為不可女可也審零之鷄也疋猷乾與孔=曰甸丘虐善之於差虐憲之巨鰭虐信之■文王虐荒之清
22	之甸丘曰甸又情而亡望虐善之於差曰四矢夏呂御翫虐憲之■巨鰭曰疋義一氏心女結也虐信之文王王才上於邵于天虐荒之
23	慶鄘呂樂訶而會呂道交見善而季冬虐不獸人■兔虐疋甬人則虐取
24	呂□蔽之古也■后稷之見貴也■則呂文武之惠也■虐呂甘棠尋宗宙之敬■民嘗古然甚貴疋人必敬疋立斂疋人必好疋所為亞疋人者亦然
25	腸=少人■又兔不弄皆■大田之采章智言而又豐■少明不
26	忠■北白舟悶■浴風悉■蓼莪又孝志■陞又長楚尋而瑟之也
27	女此可斯雀之矣僮疋所悉必曰虐奚舍之賓贈氏也孔=曰七衛智難■中氏君子■北風不幽人之怨子立不
28	亞而不慶牖又薺慙窳而不智言■青蠅智
29	蠢而不智人■涉秦疋幽律而士■角幡婦■河水智

5.1. The Partially Inscribed Slips


As noted earlier, slip 2 to 7 have blank spaces at their tips and ends with inscriptions appearing only in the middle sections. Different propositions for this phenomenon have been advanced. Zhou Fengwu and Chi Hsiu-sheng believe that the blank spaces were originally filled with texts but they had been subsequently expunged (Zhou 2002, 188; Chi 2004, 5). On the other hand, Liao Mingchun, having closely examined the bamboo slips, points out that the blank spaces did not have texts at all; if calligraphy were originally existent, the ink would have penetrated deeply into the bamboo tissues (2004a, 5). After observing the conditions of the bamboo slips Li Rui also believes that these spaces were originally kept blank. Li sees no particular purpose for cutting any texts after they had been written and postulates that these slips had been cut before inscription (2008, 151). On the other hand, Huang Huaixin believes that texts originally existed on the slips but they had been removed for religious or other unknown reasons (2004, 8). My own observation is that the faded graph ‘一’ on slip 16 (see Appendix A) shows that ink penetration through the bamboo fibres was not as deep as some scholars have thought, but the bamboo ‘palimpsest’ of slips 2 to 7 had been so thoroughly scraped (or damaged?) that the deep bamboo tissues have been exposed; traces of previous writing, if any, could have been totally expurgated. A question may be relevant: if the spaces had been left blank originally there is no apparent reason to scrape them, let alone cutting deeply into the bamboo tissues to produce the blank spaces. The more pressing question is whether their blank spaces meant that they were originally a group of their own. That these slips should be grouped together appears to be the majority view of the researchers. I concur with Ge Liang 葛亮, curator of the Shanghai Museum, that speculating on why there are blank spaces is now meaningless⁵⁴ as the lacunae have to be dealt with irrespective of what caused them. In considering slips 2 to 7 as an inseparable group most commentators have suggested orders different to Ma’s arrangement whilst others, in believing that they were originally fully inscribed, would not differentiate them from the rest. My inclination is that the most important criteria for their arrangement are their textual flow and contexts which dictate their sequencing.

⁵⁴ In conversation with Ge Liang at the Shanghai Museum.

5.2. Chapter Division, Paragraphing and Punctuation

The original text as inscribed includes some elementary punctuation marks, notably there are three “” (slips 1, 5 and 18) and numerous “” and “”. Whilst one cannot expect pre-Qin texts to have a punctuation system similar to ours of the twenty-first century, the sign “” can be taken to mark the end of an episode or the equivalent of a present day section or even a chapter; “” may mark the end of a paragraph and “”, a sentence. However, as can be seen from the bamboo text not all places that need punctuation are punctuated. Thus different ways of breaking up an unpunctuated sentence may produce different readings of the text yielding different meanings.

Whilst the physical features of the bamboo slips and punctuations as discussed above are to be considered for textual reconstruction, the primary focus is to bring textual coherence to bear on the reconstructed text. The bamboo slips can easily lend themselves to arrangements that can manifest a well-structured essay, as is the case with Li Xueqin’s interpretation which shows a discourse explicating the odes in the order of the “Feng”, “Nan” and “Song” divisions of the *Shijing* (2002, 51). Ma Chengyuan’s arrangement, however, shows the commentaries on the odes in the order of the “Song”, “Ya” and “Feng”, the reverse of the received *Maoshi* sequence. This has led to speculations on whether the *Odes* had a different order of divisional rubrics during Confucius’ time to that of *Maoshi* as it is received today. In fact any conclusion based on the arranged text is a self-fulfilling prophecy; indeed as the discursive structure of “Kongzi shilun” is malleable by way of slip rearrangement; it cannot serve as evidence of the original *Shi* rubrication order.

Leading Chinese commentators have proposed different slip arrangements for the reconstructed text. Whilst a detailed comparison of the various versions lies outside the purview of this thesis, it is noted that the different arrangements of the bamboo text stem from different reading strategies. Exegetes who believe that the first sentence of slip 1 – “行此者其有不王乎” followed by the major break sign “” – belongs to the preceding manuscript now known as “Zigao”, have made slip 1 the first slip of “Kongzi shilun”. Those who believe that the manuscript starts with an introductory comment on the *Odes* and that the *liubajian* should not be separated have placed slips 2 to 7 together after slip 1. If the contents of these slips are treated as the conclusion then they have been placed last. The rest of the slips containing commentaries on individual odes have been arranged according to the textual flow

and in groups of the divisions (the “Feng”, “Ya” and “Song”, but not necessarily in that order) to which they belong. Only Chi Hsiu-sheng has put slip 6 last, but this arrangement on the whole occurs to me as the most coherent in terms of textual flow.

5.3. Slip Sequence

As already mentioned, many of the bamboo slips are broken and some believed to be missing, the available text is incomplete. Textual reconstruction is a necessary step to enhance the raw data before any interpretation can make sense. This exercise involves further investigation into the graphs as initially identified and the sequencing of the bamboo slips as initially arranged. At the same time the lacunae are to be filled in, so too the punctuation and paragraphing of the text are to be determined. As can be seen from Table 1 and Table 4, all except one of the twenty-nine bamboo slips are short of the full length which means that there is a large number of missing words. An additional problem is the treatment of bamboo slips 2 to 7 which have their top and bottom parts left blank. Whilst the reasons for their blankness remain unknown; the more pressing question is whether they should be grouped together or should they be mixed among the other slips irrespective of their common feature of blank spaces? Each of these issues cannot be dealt with in isolation from the others, for in determining the order of the bamboo slips with reference to their physical features (calligraphic style, positions of the notches etc), textual flow between possible consecutive slips has to be considered. Likewise in filling in the missing words, textual meaning has to be determined vis-à-vis the slip length, which is a decisive factor for estimating the number of characters that were originally inscribed. In the end, tackling these problems would involve a holistic approach by considering all the issues together intuitively. The result of textual reconstruction is certain to produce different subjective versions as the reading of the text in a certain way would make more sense to a particular interpreter than the other.

The task of identifying the archaic Chu scripts has been undertaken by philologists who have delved into received or discovered texts of comparable antiquity and palaeographic dictionaries. They have also been constructively debating on the Chu scripts resulting in a whole range of possible readings which will be dealt with in the next chapter when translation of the text is considered.

As noted earlier, the physical features of the bamboo slips would provide clues to their original sequence and the possible number of missing words. In view of

the fact that the bamboo slips were originally bound by strings across their width at three notched places, it is only reasonable to assume that consecutive bamboo slips should not have the notches misaligned. The approximate number of missing words can also be estimated with reference to the slip length and average word spacing, a method used by commentators in the course of reconstructing the text. The following table, Table 5, will serve to illustrate the point. The highlighted slips are those with the top and/or bottom notches intact, although they might be broken at either or both ends. The rest of the slips are broken beyond the notches one way or another, thus making alignment comparisons impossible.

Of the entire cache slip 2 is the only slip that is intact. Its full length measures 55.5 cm which could have been the original length of all the other broken slips. It could also be deduced from column C of Table 5 that words were spaced in about 1 cm each, that is, a fully inscribed slip should have 55 to 56 words. Thus the number of words that are missing, either from the broken parts or the blank spaces of slips 2 to 7 (if they originally had words) could be estimated with reference to the lengths as shown tabulated below. Li Xueqin points out that slips 14 and 12 could well be one slip, so are slips 13 and 15, 18 and 19, having regard to their contexts (2005, 247). Adopting Li's opinion, the number of characters missing has been adjusted accordingly. In theory the notch positions of adjoining slip should align with each other but as the bamboo slips have undergone dehydration and low-temperature vacuum treatments, they have shrunk differentially. Thus the comparison of notch alignments to determine slip sequence is inconclusive.

Table 5 shows the estimated characters that are possibly missing on each slip, where C* represents the number of characters inscribed on a slip, and C** = refers to the possible numbers of characters missing on the top/bottom sections. Table 6 that follows shows the various slip arrangements by scholars. It is noted that Staack's choice is basically similar to Huang Huaixin's proposed slip order, save slips 17-19-18 compared to Huang's 19-18-17. These different arrangements have no significant impact on meaning.

Table 5 –Comparison of Bamboo Slip Features


Slip No.	L cm	N ₁ cm	N ₂ cm	N ₃ cm	N ₄ cm	N ₂ + N ₃ cm	C*	C**	Legend (Not to scale)
1	22	-	17.1	5	-	22.1	23	11/21	 <p>Length (L)</p> <p>Length to top (N₁)</p> <p>Length to notch (N₂)</p> <p>Length to notch (N₃)</p> <p>Length to notch (N₄)</p>
2	55.5	8.7	19.2	19.5	8.1	38.7	38	8/8	
3	51	4.9	19.1	19.2	7.8	38.3	40	8/8	
4	46.1	7.3	19.2	19.5	0.1	38.7	43	9/4	
5	47.5	8.5	19.3	19.6	0.1	38.9	38	9/8	
6	49.5	0.7	19.7	20.4	8.7	40.1	43	5/9	
7	42	-	16.9	19.6	5.5		40	10/7	
8	52.4	8.8	19.2	19.4	5	38.6	53	0/2	
9	53.8	8.7	19.2	19.4	6.5	38.6	57	0/1	
10	46	8.4	19.1	18.5	-		46	0/9	
11	38.1	-	10.3	19.2	8.6		38	17/0	
12	18.5	-	18.5	-	-		18	2/8	
13	23.7	7.3	16.4	-	-		24	5/1	
14	24.5	8.7	16.8	-	-		23	0/2	
15	18.3	0.1	18.3	-	-		18	1/8	
16	47.8	0.7	19.2	19.4	8.5	38.6	50	6/0	
17	24.1	-	8.5	15.6	-		28	0/27	
18	18.6	-	-	18	0.6		19	27/9	
19	21.3	1.3	19.3	1	-		21	7/27	
20	44.3	6.4	19.2	18.7	-		44	2/10	
21	47.6	8.7	19.3	19.5	0.1	38.8	49	0/7	
22	38.4 + 9.3	0.7 -	19.3 -	18.4 0.7	8.6		42 10	1/6	
23	27.7	-	0.1	19.2	8.4		26	30/0	
24	53.8	8.6	19.2	19.4	6.6	38.6	54	0/3	
25	20	-	0.1	19.5	0.1		22	28/6	
26	23.4	4	19.3	0.1	-		22	4/30	
27	43	5.4	19.2	18.4	-		42	3/11	
28	20.3	0.7	19.2	-	-		16	7/32	
29	18.7	-	18.4	-	-		18	8/30	

Table 6 – Possible Bamboo Slip Arrangements

Slip No. Commentator	Ma Chengyuan 馬承源	Pu Maozuo 濮茅左	Li Xueqin 李學勤	Li Ling 李零	Liao Mingchun 廖名春	Jiang Guanghui 姜廣輝	Fan Yuzhou 范毓周	Cao Feng 曹鋒	Li Rui 李銳	Chi Hsiu-sheng 季旭昇	Huang Huaixin 黃懷信	Thies Staack
1	1	1	10	1	1	4	4	1	10	1	10	10
2	2	2	14	19	8	5	5	2	14	2	14	14
3	3	3	12	20	9	1	6	3	12	3	12	12
4	4	4	13	18	10	10	1	4	13	4	13	13
5	5	5	15	11	14	14	10	5	15	5	15	15
6	6	6	11	16	12	12	11	6	11	7	11	11
7	7	7	16	10	13	13	19	7	16	8	16	16
8	8	8	24	12	15	15	15	10	24	9	24	24
9	9	9	20	13	11	11	16	14	20	10	20	20
10	10	10	27	14	16	16	12	12	19	14	27	27
11	11	14	19	15	24	24	14	13	18	12	19	17
12	12	15	18	24	20	20	13	15	9	13	18	19
13	13	11	8	27	19	27	24	11	21	15	17	18
14	14	12	9	29	18	23	20	16	22	11	25	25
15	15	13	17	28	27	19	18	24	23	16	26	26
16	16	16	25	25	29	18	27	20	27	24	28	28
17	17	20	26	26	26	17	29	19	25	20	29	29
18	18	24	23	17	28	25	28	18	8	18	23	23
19	19	19	28	8	17	26	26	8	28	19	8	8
20	20	17	29	9	25	28	17	9	29	27	9	9
21	21	18	21	23	23	29	25	21	26	17	21	21
22	22	21	22	21	21	8	23	22	17	23	22	22
23	23	22	6	22	22	9	9	23	4	25	6	6
24	24	23	7	6	6*	21	8	27	5	26	7	7
25	25	25	2	4	4	22	21	26	6	28	2	2
26	26	26	3	5	5	6	22	25	7	29	3	3
27	27	27	4	7	6*	7	7	28	2	21	4	4
28	28	28	5	2	7	2	2	29	3	22	5	5
29	29	29	1	3	2	3	23	17	1	6	1	1

Source: Adopted from Chi Hsiu-sheng and Zheng Yushan 2004, 2; Huang Huaxin 2004, 18-22;

Thies Staack 2010, 883.

5.4. Transcription and Translation

In reconstructing the text I have adopted the slip arrangement as proposed by Chi Hsiu-sheng as it appears to provide the most logical textual structure. As to the reading of the text it has been syncretised from the work of various commentators after due consideration of their merits. The following is a preview of the reconstructed text which forms the primary text for translation. The major text break sign “—” has been retained but others have been replaced with modern punctuation marks. Ancient graphs have been substituted with equivalent characters in current usage. The conventions used here are: “□” signifies a word possibly missing from a slip,⁵⁵ “字” suggests a word which can be reasonably inserted for the lacunae, and the number in 【】 that follows the text denotes the published slip number. Ode titles will appear in bold typeface for ease of reference. Many exegetes have divided the text into chapters; however, I have refrained from doing this as it is more of an arbitrary afterthought than the original structure.

孔子詩論

□□□□□□□□行此者其有不王乎?—孔子曰：詩無素志，樂無素情，文無素言□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□【1】□□□□□□□□嗣也，文王受命矣—頌平德也，多言后。其樂安而遲，其歌伸而易。其思深而遠，至矣。大雅，盛德也，多言□□□□□□□□【2】□□□□小雅德也，多言難而怨懟者也，衰矣，少矣。邦風其納物也博，普觀人俗焉，大斂材焉。其言文，其聲善。孔子曰：唯能夫□□□□□□□□【3】□□□□□□□□孔子曰，詩其猷平門，與賤民而豫之，其用心也將何如？曰：邦風是也。民之有感患也，上下之不和者，其用心也將何如？曰：小雅是也【4】□□□者何如？曰大雅是也。有成功者何如，曰頌是也。—清廟王德也，至矣。敬宗廟之禮，以為其本，秉文之德，以為其質。肅雍顯相□□□□□□

⁵⁵ The numbers of missing words were estimated from slip lengths as per Table 5. It is highly probable that there are missing slips and such lacunae are not shown.

也。孔子曰：蟋蟀知難。仲氏君子。北風不絕人之怨。子立不□□□□
 □□□□□□□【27】東方未明有利詞。將仲[子]之言不可不畏也。揚之
 水其愛婦烈。采葛之愛婦□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□
 □□□□□【17】□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□
 □□□□鹿鳴以樂，始而會以道，交見善而效，終乎不厭人。免置其用
 人則吾取【23】□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□
 □□[君][子]陽陽小人。免爰不逢時。大田之卒章，知言而有禮。小明不□
 □□□□□【25】□□□□忠。邶柏舟悶。谷風悲。蓼莪有孝志。隰有萇
 楚得而悔之也□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□
 □□□【26】□□□□[相][鼠][言]惡而不憫。牆有茨慎密而不知言。青蠅知
 □□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□
 【28】□□□□□□□□患而不知人。涉秦[褰裳]其絕，著而士。角枕
 [葛生]婦。河水智□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□
 【29】貴
 也。[無]將大車之囂也，則以為不可如何也。湛露之溢也，其猷軫歟。
 孔子曰：宛丘吾善之。猗嗟吾喜之。鴈鳴吾信之。文王吾美之。清[廟]
 [吾][敬][之]。□□□【21】□之。宛丘曰：洵有情，而無妄，吾善之。猗嗟
 曰：四矢反，以御亂，吾喜之。鴈鳴曰：其儀一也，心如結也，吾信
 之。文王[曰]：[文]王在上，於昭于天，吾美之□□□□□□【22】[清][廟]
 [曰]：[濟][濟]多士，秉文之德，吾敬之。烈文曰：乍競唯人，丕顯唯德。
 於呼！前王不忘，吾悅之。昊天有成命，二后受之，貴且顯矣。頌□□
 □□□□□□□【6】

“Confucian Poetics”

(Translation)

... whoever puts this into practice, will he not be anointed king? Confucius said,
 “The *Odes* does not manifest unseemly intentions; its music does not express
 indelicate emotions, its lyrics do not articulate indecent locution...”【1】... in
 succession, King Wen received the Mandate of Heaven. The “Song” is about the

great virtue [of the kings]; its music is calm and graceful. Its choruses are lingering and peaceful. Its thoughts are profound and far reaching. It is superlative. The “*Daya*” is about high virtue, it mainly concerns ... 【2】 ... [The “*Xiaoya*” is about ... virtue;] it mainly talks about difficult times with a sense of discontent and regret, [reflecting the] declining social conditions and the [rulers’] lack of virtue. The ‘*Bangfeng*’ embraces many things: it makes extensive observations of the social mores, manifesting the common people’s mundane bucolic life. Its lyrics are cultured; its tunes are pleasing. Confucius said, “If only ...” 【3】 ... [Confucius] said, “The *Odes* is like an enormous door. It allows the common people [to let themselves out] freely.” How do they put their mind to speaking out [freely]? [I] say, it is all in the ‘*Bangfeng*’. When the people have grievances, or when conflicts arise between subordinates and superiors, how do they put their mind to speaking out [freely]? [I] say, it is all in the “*Xiaoya*”....” 【4】 ... [How ... I say, it is all in the “*Daya*”]. How do those who have great achievements speak their mind? [I] say, it is all in the “*Song*”. “*Qingmiao*” speaks of kingly virtue.... It is supreme. [The celebrants] took revering the rituals of the ancestral temples to be their essential duty, and the adoption of King Wen’s virtue to be their attribute. “Respectful and harmonious [were the celebrants”] 【5】 ... “[God said to King Wen, I] appreciate your resplendent virtue.” What does it mean? It means King Wen’s sincerity. “The favouring appointment was from Heaven, / Giving the throne to our king Wen.” King Wen was appointed because of his sincerity. Confucius said, “This is a providential mandate! King Wen made perfect his own virtue, but could [that alone make him king? No.] This had to be a providential appointment.” ... 【7】 “*Shiyue zhijiao*” is about artful criticism. “*Yu wu zhen*” and “*Jie nan shan*” both portray the ruling class whose depravities [some] aristocrats considered vile. “*Xiaomin*” is sceptical, as it queries the integrity of the policy makers. The language of “*Xiaowan*” is not invective, but it expresses a touch of trepidation. “*Xiaobian*” and “*Qiaoyan*” depict the harm caused by traducers. “*Famu*” [is not] 【8】 really about being self-critical. “*Tianbao*” concerns the unlimited fortune bestowed upon [the king], because he possessed virtue. The accusations in “*Qifu*” are voiced with valid reasons. “*Huangniao*” describes the hardship [that one faces in an alien country], which arouses one’s desire for returning home; is it not a complaint from one who knows a sense of shame? “*Jingjing zhi e*” is about the benefits one can get [from befriending

virtuous people]. “**Changchang zhi hua**” ... 【9】 The transformation depicted in “**Guanju**”, the blessedness mentioned in “**Jiumu**”, the wisdom expressed in “**Hanguang**”, the wedding in “**Quechao**”, the requital in “**Gantang**”, the sorrow in “**Lüyi**”, the passion in “**Yanyan**” – what can be said about these sentiments? [I] say, [What these poems] bring to bear are the morals that are to be cherished. The sensual feelings in “**Guanju**” are contained within propriety... 【10】 twice, the forth stanza explicates this. With zithers and lyres sensual appetites are versed in cultural delights. With bells and drums.... 【14】 ... is the reversal [from sensuality] to rituality not transformation? “**Jiumu**” is about the bestowal of fortune upon the *junzi*; [is this not divine favour?].... 【12】 [“**Hanguang**” advocates] abstaining from the quest for the unreachable and the impossible; is it not about knowing the immutable truth? “**Quechao**” depicts [a wedding procession] of carriages in hundreds; is this not generosity? The affection of which “**Gantang**”... 【13】 concerns [the memory] of a person and associating that fondness with his tree; such requital of affection is profound indeed. The affection depicted in “**Gantang**” is devoted to Shao Gong ... 【15】 affection ... The transformation presented in “**Guanju**” indicates that its thoughts are edifying. The blessing that “**Jiumu**” depicts is [the *junzi*’s] fortune. The wisdom of “**Hanguang**” is about knowing what cannot be attained. The wedding described in “**Quechao**” is about generosity. 【11】 ... Shao Gong. The grief in “**Lüyi**” is caused by remembrance of one’s dearly departed. The emotion portrayed in “**Yanyan**” shows how devout love can be. Confucius said, “From “**Getan**” I discern the emotion of venerating one’s ancestors. It is the emotional disposition of the people that when something is seen as good, they would wish to retrace its origin. Dolichos are lauded 【16】 because from them clothing is made. Likewise Hou Ji [the ancestor] is esteemed because of the virtues of [his descendants, King] Wen and Wu. From “**Gantang**” I understand the respect paid to the ancestral temple. It is the emotional disposition of the people that when they venerate a person, they would surely respect his position. If they are fond of a person, they would surely cherish his actions. The same applies to disliking someone... 【24】 [From “**Mugua**” I know that the rules of giving] money or silk cannot be dispensed with. People are emotionally disposed to find means to express their implicit intents. That expression of [goodwill] has to be conveyed before it can be accepted, or as a precursor of friendship, one must not be remiss [in observing such decorum]. From “**Didu**” I

come to understand that official duty.... 【20】 ... With the reciprocation of gifts, “**Mugua**” elucidates the expression of goodwill I am particularly moved by the profundity of the love “**Didu**” expresses... 【18】 ... [being] ignorant and having cried out to Heaven, one still vents words of regret. “**Mugua**” is about the covert intention [of cultivating friendship] that has yet to be expressed ... 【19】 ... How is that? That is [personal sacrifice] for the sake of official duty. Leaving one’s beloved must have impelled one to say that parting is hard to bear; [the words ring] as if they were a gift before parting. Confucius said, ““**Xishuai**” is about recognizing the difficulty [in life]. “**Zhongshi**” is about the [virtuous] *junzi*. “**Beifeng**” evinces people’s endless consternation. “**Zili**” does not ... 【27】 “**Dongfang weiming**” contains sharp words [of criticism]. “**Jiang Zhong [Zi]**” is about being in awe of words. “**Yang Zhi Shui**” is about [the poet’s] ardent love of his wife. “**Caige**” is about [the poet’s] earnest love of his wife.... 【17】 ... “**Luming**” is about state banquets; the opening stanza describes the congress as an opportunity [for the partakers] to share moral experiences. In their interaction they learn from one another the paragon of virtue, but in the end people’s [appetite for goodness] was insatiable. I endorse the people employed [as portrayed in] the “**Tuju**”. 【23】 ... “[**Junzi yangyang**” is about a petty man. “**Tuyuan**” discusses a man born into an inopportune era. The final stanza of “**Datian**” is about the effective instruction of propriety [through action]. “**Xiaoming**” is not ... 【25】 ... loyal “**Bozhou**” of the “**Beifeng**” expresses melancholy. “**Gufeng**” speaks of grief. “**Liao e**” expresses filial piety. “**Xiyou changchu**” regrets one’s possession.... 【26】 ... “[**Xiangshu**”] is about intense animosity. “**Qiang youci**” tells of secretive talks that cannot be divulged. “**Qingying**” is about knowing 【28】 ... grievance but not knowing people. “**Sheqin**” [“**Qianchang**”] shows resoluteness. “**Zhe**” is about a bridegroom. “**Jiaozhen**” [“**Gesheng**”] speaks of a woman [longing for her husband]. “**Heshui**” tells of intelligence... 【29】 nobility. The notion of feeling at ease as expressed in “[**Wu**] **jiang dache**” is in fact a feeling of helplessness. The praises in “**Zhanlu**” are offered without hesitation. Confucius said, “I endorse the goodness of “**Wanqiu**”. I find delight in “**Yijie**”. I consider “**Shijiu**” credible. I find “**Wenwang**” praiseworthy, and “**Qingmiao**” [I find it respectable.] 【21】 ... It is said in “**Wanqiu**”, “Believing in sincerity, and not playing trickery”, I commend it. As it is said in “**Yijie**”, “The four [arrows] all hit the same [target]! One [is] able to withstand rebellion!” I find

this delightful. “**Shijiu**” says, “[The junzi] is truthful to one partner, / His heart is as if it were tied to what is correct.” I find this credible. It is written in “**Wenwang**”, “King Wan is on high; / Oh! Bright is he in heaven”, I praise it.... 【22】

[“**Qingmiao**” says, “Great was] the number of the officers: / [All] assiduous followers of the virtue of king Wan”, I respect it. “Liewen” says, “What is most powerful is the being the man; / What is most distinguished is being virtuous; /Ah! The former kings are not forgotten!” I take joy in it. “Heaven made its determinate appointment, / Which [our] two sovereigns received”; it is august and venerable. The “Song”.... 【6】

6. Summary

This chapter has inquired into the physical and structural forms of the bamboo slips on which “Kongzi shilun” has been inscribed. The issues that have been discussed, namely, their physical features, authorship and date of inditement, the appropriateness of the manuscript title and descriptions of its outline and themes, serve as the ‘pre-structure’ of apprehension. Factors affecting the instability of the text and its reconstruction have also been considered. The Chinese transcription and English translation presented above are the results of the textual study the details of which will be set out in the next chapter.

Part B TEXTUAL STUDY

Chapter 3 Transcription, Translation and Annotations

Being translation, the translation will only be
bad translation, by definition as it were.

– Paul Ricoeur
On Translation

The preceding chapter was devoted to discussing the physical and structural forms of the bamboo slips on which “Kongzi shilun” was inscribed. Also examined was the primary text, which has been found to be unstable and has to be reconstructed. Having previewed the reconstructed text, I will now ‘flashback’ to the textual study which had produced the transcript and translation in the first place. This chapter will evaluate the mass of exegetical opinions with a view to critiquing, and if appropriate, adopting, the interpretations propounded by various exegetes, or in case of dissension, advancing my own considered opinion. I will then translate the text into English, section by section. The objective of this exercise is to render the manuscript intelligible in English, and from the comprehension of its content discern the interpretative strategy of Confucius’ commentary as the next phase of this project. Accompanying the translation are annotations which will deal with the etymological, lexical and other interpretative issues. However, as philological investigation is not the ultimate objective of this study, I will forgo discussions of the commonly recognized Chu graphs, leaving room for the glossary of the more controversial characters. Whilst Chinese texts rather than their transliterations are the targets to be translated, the *pinyin* that usually accompany Chinese characters will be omitted if it is likely to impede the textual flow. Ambiguities of the source text and diverging

exegetical opinions, which are not infrequent, will be resolved by letting the text speak in its linguistic context. To this end I will avoid, where possible at this stage, references to the Mao prefaces concerning the meaning of the poems in order to be free from their influence. In the ensuing discussion, slip numbers are shown in square brackets “【】”; “□” denotes a missing character but if the lacuna is more than three characters it will be represented by “...”, whereas a missing character that can be filled with reasonable certainty will be boxed as “字”. In view of the length of this chapter, the ensuing translation will be divided into four sections with improvised headings for ease of navigation; these heading do not form part of the original text. It is acknowledged that the manuscript contains commentaries of an implied author or authors other than those claimed to be Confucius’, but purely for the sake of convenience here and in all future discussions, the text quoted or the comments made in the manuscript are attributed to Confucius (as claimed) without distinction.

1. The *Odes*: An Overview

Shangbo Transcription:

行此者丌又不王 虐—孔=曰 訾亡隱志 樂亡隱情 旻亡隱言…【1】

My Reading:

行此者其有不王乎？孔子曰：詩無訾志，樂無訾情，文無訾言…【1】

Translation:

... whoever puts this into practice, will he not be anointed king? Confucius said, “The *Odes* does not manifest unseemly intentions; its music does not express indelicate emotions, its lyrics do not articulate indecent locution...”【1】

Annotation:

Punctuated by a major break mark “—”, the first sentence “行此者其有不王乎” is considered by many to be part of the preceding manuscript now known as “Zigao” within the same corpus (Ma 2001, 123). Assuming that the adopted slip sequence is correct, then “Kongzi shilun” begins with “孔=曰 訾亡隱志”. The opening sentences can be interpreted in a number of ways.

Whilst *shi* 詩 is tacitly understood to be the *Odes*, *yue* 樂 and *wen* 文 have been rendered, as most commentators have done, simply as music and literature in general. Jiang Linchang claims that 文 points to “the choreography attuned to the music” and 言 denotes “the lyrics of the *Shi*” (2002, 106). However, it is felt that bodily postures and lyrics would form an awkward collocation. Others render 文 as *wencai* 文采 (literary beauty) (Sheng 2005, 86) but as Cao Jianguo points out, this reading is out of order when 詩 and 樂 are forms of art within the linguistic context, so too is 文 (2010, 43).

The graph *wang* 亡 means ‘death’, but by extension it can also mean ‘discontinuation’, ‘demise’ or ‘cessation’. As Qiu Dexiu 邱德修 points out, the trope *Shiwang* 詩亡 can be found in the *Mencius* 6.B.21 (2004, 303):

孟子曰：“王者之跡熄而詩亡，詩亡然後春秋作。”

Mencius said, “After the influence of the true King came to an end, songs were no longer composed. When songs were no longer composed, the *Spring and Autumn Annals* were written.” (Lau 2003, 178-81)

It follows that 詩亡 in 訾亡隱志” can possibly be translated as ‘when poetry was no longer written’, ‘without poetry’, or ‘no poetry’ (Sheng 2005, 87). On the other hand *wang* 亡 is the ancient graph for *wu* 無, meaning ‘no’ or ‘nothing’. It is used as an adjective to describe the negative or the opposite of a thing or situation. In a coetaneous bamboo manuscript entitled “Xing zi ming chu” (性自命出) of the Guodian corpus, a similar expression can be found: “凡人雖有性，心亡定志” (while all human beings possess inborn nature, the heart/mind has no fixed intention).⁵⁶ In this expression, *wang* 亡 stands for 無 and is a contrast to the word *you* 有. Whether 亡 is taken to mean ‘cessation’ or ‘no’, it is an attribute clearly carrying a negative meaning.

The Chu character 隱 is an erstwhile unknown graph on whose meaning scholarly opinions are divided. Ma Chengyuan proposes to read it as *li* 離 (detached), citing examples from ancient texts where it is found but has not clarified its contextual meaning (Ma 2001, 126). Other scholars have suggested different readings: *lin* 吝 (stingy) (2001a, 302-6), *lin* 鄰 (adjoining), *min* 泯 (obliterate), *ling*

⁵⁶ Modified from Shirley Chan’s translation, see Chan, S. 2009, 365.

凌 (to rise), *lian* 憐 (to pity), *min* 忖 (unintelligible) and so on. Li Xueqin asserts that it should be read as *yin* 隱, meaning ‘hidden’ or ‘undisclosed’ (2002d, 31). Agreeing with Li, Qiu Dexiu’s etymological study traces the root of 隱 from 隱 (Qiu 2004, 292-306). It ought to be pointed out that if 隱 is identified as 隱 on this slip it is written differently as 隱 on slip 20. Chao Fulin concurs with Li but contends that the word does not mean ‘hidden’ (2008, 23). Citing the expression “*yin ji er wo*” (隱几而臥) ([Mencius] lay down, leaning against a low table) (Lau 2003, 95) from the *Mencius* 2.B.11, Chao claims that 隱 means *ju* 據 (to occupy) and by extrapolation, *juni* 拘泥 (be confined to). Chao proposes that 詩無隱志 means that poetry should not be confined to expressing intentions but also emotions. However, this interpretation is problematic as it pre-empts the ensuing comment 樂無隱情, which places emotions within the orbit of musical expression. If Chao’s rationale is applied to music, it begs the question that if music is not confined to expressing emotions, what else will it express?

Likewise by phonetic borrowing Li Rui (2002, 397-8) reads 隱 as 忖, which can be written as *hun* 昏 or 愰, all meaning ‘unintelligible’. Thus Confucius can be quoted as saying that in poetry, music and literature, there is nothing unintelligible. Liao Mingchun initially reads 隱 as *min* 泯, meaning ‘to vanish’ and asserts that 詩無泯志 is the double-negative way of saying 詩言志 (Poetry expresses purpose – see previous discussions). Focusing on a part of the pictograph (as is the standard practice in philological studies), in this case 忖 (the lower right part of 隱), Liao asserts that this graph could be written as 忖, then *wen* 汶, which stands for its contemporary form *wen* 紊, as in the binome *wenluan* 紊亂 (disorderly) (2004a, 58-9).⁵⁷ Liao’s interpretation is thus: poetry, music and literature do not express disorderly intentions, emotions and language respectively.

As this bamboo slip is broken at the end, only a part of the last pictograph is revealed. Ma Chengyuan reads it as *yan* 言 (speech) (2001, 126); Li Xueqin contends that reading it as *yi* 意 (meaning) would make better sense, given the similar structure of the upper parts of these two graphs (2002d, 31). On the other hand Cao Jianguo claims that 文無隱言 could have been an inscription or copying

⁵⁷ In discussion with Liao in Sydney in January 2011, see also Liao 2008, 440.

error; the original text should read 言無隱文. Cao cogently argues that the graph *wen* 文 during the Chunqiu period mainly referred to decorative patterns rather than written text, and that Confucius had taken 言 more seriously than 文 (2010, 45). In fact 文 has been a polysemic word since Confucius' time; it may also signify principles, accomplishments, and includes the classical texts of the *Shi* 詩, *Shu* 書, *Li* 禮, *Yue* 樂 etc.⁵⁸ Cao's arguments can be reinforced by the expression *qi yan wen* “其言文” (its lyrics are cultured) appearing on slip 2 instead of 其文言. In fact 文 and 言 are both nouns; 文 can also be an adjective but is hardly ever deployed as a verb whilst 言 can be a verb but not an adjective. If 文無隱言 is not a copying error as Cao has suggested, it only shows that the distinction between 文 and 言 as nouns is fuzzy. In “Kongzi shilun” 言 refers to text as in “其言文”, whilst in the *Mencius* 文 denotes text in “不以文害辭”.⁵⁹ In fact 文 and 言 were as interchangeable then as they are now. In most transcriptions, such as that of Jiang Guanhui and the translation by Krause, 詩, 樂 and 文 are rendered as poetry, music and literature in general (Krause 2008, 50). Liao Mingchun points out that 詩, 樂 and 文 (or 言 as per Cao) specifically refer to the poetry, music and lyrics of the *Odes* (2001a, 306).

To sum up, if 隱 is read as ‘hidden’, then 詩亡隱志 may be translated as: ‘Without poetry, intentions would be hidden’. Krause's translation – “Poetry does not contain hidden sentiments. Music does not contain hidden emotions. Literature does not contain hidden language” (Krause 2008, 50) – is a succinct literal interpretation but it warrants critical review. Firstly, as previously discussed 志 (as in 言亡隱志) could be better understood as ‘intentions’ or ‘purposes’ than ‘sentiments’. More importantly, the claim that the sentiments, emotions and language of these art forms are plainly discernible (not hidden) is debatable.

As previously mentioned, in Confucius's days the *Odes* is simply called the *Shi* but when the word music is mentioned, it can refer to music that may not be

⁵⁸ See 論語·公冶長 *Analects* 5.13 “夫子之文章” is translated as ‘the Master's accomplishments’ (Lau 1992b, 41) and in 7.25 文、行、忠、信 where *wen* is translated as ‘culture’ (Lau 1992b, 63). Legge renders *wen* as ‘letters’ (Legge 1994, 1 & 2:202). Chinese exegetes consider *wen* to mean interpretations of the classical texts and the Six Arts, as in the *Huangxhu* 皇疏: 其典籍辭義謂之文; and the *Lunyu jishi* 論語集釋: “文者, 詩書六藝謂之文。” See Cheng Shude 1990, 486-7. In another part of his monograph Cao states that “所謂的‘文’是指先王的典籍文章” (*wen* is the classical scripture of the sage kings) (2010, 133).

⁵⁹ See Note 15.

associated with the *Odes*, such as the music of Zheng 鄭聲 which Confucius denounces (*Analects* 15.11). Chen Zhi asserts that during Confucius’ time, the music of the Shang dynasty, which was different from those performed for ritual purposes, was still existent in the previous Shang principalities (2009, 312). Thus it is unlikely for Confucius to say that all music expresses no indecent emotions. Despite the generality of 樂 and 文 as referents, within the overall linguistic context it can be safely assumed that 詩, 樂 and 文 here meant the poems, the tunes and the lyrics of the *Odes*.

What remains to be clarified is how the Chu graph 隱 should be read. Liu Xinfang supports the reading of the graph as ‘hidden’. He further claims that 詩亡隱志 and 詩言志 are categorical propositions that distinguish poetry from non-poetry such as those loosely rhyming writings.⁶⁰ Strictly speaking, 詩亡隱志 and 詩言志 do not conform to the schema of a standard-form categorical proposition as prescribed by logic.⁶¹ Furthermore, how is 隱志 (hidden purposes) defined? It would appear that in general the ‘purposes’ of the prosaic writings are less obscure (less hidden) than most of the *Odes*. The rationale bedecked in logic cannot be applied to 樂亡隱情 as the situation becomes a collocational clash: whilst poetry can be distinguished from non-poetry, what music is there to be distinguished from non-music? Liao Mingchun aptly points out that Confucius would be labouring the obvious to say that poetic sentiments, musical emotions and literary language are not hidden (2008, 438). In fact the Confucian approach to interpreting the *Shi* has never been a simple exercise, which indicates that the purposes of the *Shi* are not plainly intelligible. An excellent example of this is when Zixia discusses poetry with Confucius, the sudden change of subject from pulchritude to the art of painting and then the practice of rituals is hard to follow.⁶² If the *Shi* intentions, emotions and language were not hidden, then there would be no need for Confucius to comment on the *Shi* and for “Kongzi shilun” to be written, and the commentarial tradition of the *Shi* cultivated over two thousand years would not have bred so many conflicting

⁶⁰ Liu quotes prose such as “Yucong” of the Guodian corpus 郭店楚簡語叢, “Fu – Rhyme-Prose Poems” and “Working Songs” of the *Xunzi* 荀子·賦篇, 成相 and “Weili zhidao” of the Shuihudi Qin bamboo slips 睡虎地秦簡為吏之道, which do not clearly utter their purposes (2003, 6).

⁶¹ See Copi and Cohen 1998, 222. A categorical proposition is about classes or categories, affirming or denying one class is included in another class, in whole or in part. 詩亡隱志 lack a quantifier (such as ‘all’ or ‘some’, for instance ‘all’ *shi* express *zhi* or ‘some’ *shi* have no hidden *zhi*).

⁶² 論語·八佾 *Analects* 3.8, see previous discussion in Chapter 1.

interpretations. Furthermore as previously discussed, of all the poetic languages only *fu* can be said to be plainly discernible narratives and descriptions. If poetry does not have hidden intentions then *bi* and *xing* would not have been established as methods of poetic expression. This is not to say that the *Odes* are entirely unintelligible; on this point Van Zoeren's observation is well put: the intentions and purposes of the *Odes* are "self-revealed and yet requiring interpretation or certification" (1991, 59); so are the emotions of the music and the thoughts of the lyrics. It follows that 隱 cannot simply be read as 'hidden'. Liao Mingchun's reading of 隱 as *wen* 紊 appears to be soundly based; its extended meaning of 紊亂 (unseemly, indelicate, indecent) has therefore been adopted in this translation.

Shangbo Transcription:

…寺也文王受命矣■訟坪惠也多言遠丌樂安而犀丌訶紳而茅■丌思深而遠至矣■大顯盛惠也多言…【2】

My Reading:

…嗣也，文王受命矣！頌，平德也，多言后。其樂安而遲，其歌伸而易。其思深而遠，至矣。大雅盛德也，多言…【2】

Translation:

... in succession, King Wen received the Mandate of Heaven. The "Song" is about the great virtue [of the kings]; its music is calm and graceful. Its choruses are lingering and peaceful. Its thoughts are profound and far reaching. It is superlative. The "Daya" is about high virtue ...【2】

Annotation:

Although this slip is physically intact, it is a *liubaijian* with blank spaces at both ends. The first sentence is incomplete; the two existent graphs have been transcribed as “寺也” by Ma Chengyuan (2001, 127). Other scholars have proposed that 寺 can be read as *shi* 時 (time or fortune), *shi* 詩 (poetry) (Huang Huaixin 2004), and *zhi* 志 (purpose) (Liao 2004a, 12), but Chi and Zheng consider it indeterminate (2004, 8). A comparison of its graphic form with those of its possible readings is shown below:



寺, slip 2 of “Kongzi shilun”



詩, slip 16 of “Kongzi shilun”



詩, slip 11 of “Ziyi” 緇衣 “Black robe” of the Shangbo corpus





時, slip 10 of “Kongzi shilun”



志, slip 26 of “Kongzi shilun”




詩, slip 1 of “Ziyi” of the Guodian corpus

The Guodian graph  appearing in the frequently used expression “詩云” (as it is said in the *Odes*) in “Ziyi” is a phonetic loan from 寺, which was written as  in “Kongzi shilun”. However, as can be seen above, the pictographs of 詩, 時 and 志 were consistently written in different forms to 寺 within the same manuscript. Whilst these readings may all be possible by reason of *tongjia* 通假 (euphony or phonetic loan, similar to a rebus), on the balance of probabilities I am inclined to read it as 寺 in its original form, at least for the time being. This graph is made up of the radical 之 (in its archaic form 𠂇 as previously noted), followed by *you* 又, which symbolizes the right hand, and as such, it is the early pictograph for 持 (to hold or to control) (He 1998, 43-4, 9). According to the *Shuowen jiezi*, 寺 means “廷, 法度者也” (*ting*, those concerned with law and order), whereas 廷 is defined as “朝中也” (朝廷 imperial administration). In the “Book on architecture” of the *Shiming* 釋名 • 釋宮室, a Later Han lexicon, 寺 is glossed as “嗣, 治事者嗣續於其內也”⁶³ (*si*, a place or an office in which a public officer or minister works), with the connotation that the office is held continually or by succession (that is 持續 or 嗣續). This leads us back to the definition of 嗣 in the *Shuowen jiezi*: “諸侯嗣國也” (to inherit or succeed, such as a prince’s succession to a ducal state). As a verb, 嗣 can be found

⁶³ See Chinese Text Project hub, <http://ctext.org/shi-ming?searchu=%E5%AF%BA>, accessed 12 May 2012. A government ministry is called 寺 during the Qin and Han, e.g. *dalishi* 大理寺 (the Judiciary).

in *The Rites of Zhou* 周禮 meaning to ‘control or govern’.⁶⁴ The word 寺 appears in three odes⁶⁵ as an attribute of 人 – *si ren* 寺人 – literally means people of the royal court,⁶⁶ or more specifically, eunuchs, as defined in *The Rites of Zhou*.⁶⁷ Clearly the graphs of 寺 and 嗣 are pregnant with meanings concerning the royal court and rulership, making it possible that 寺 may stand for 嗣 or 治 (to rule). Although their interchangeability has yet to be found in other ancient texts, their alternative reading is permissible by way of *tongjia*.⁶⁸ Furthermore, recorded in “King Wen as son and heir” 文王世子 of the *Liji* are two passages about King Wen as “the eldest son by the proper wife, [he] was employed to ascend, take precedence in partaking of what had been left [from the ancestral worship].” (“登餼受爵以上嗣”) (Legge 1967, 1:357) Thus, given their phonetic and semantic affinities it stands to reason that 寺 may be read as 嗣 or 治. However, this reading remains to be a postulation as it very much depends on the missing words that would prescribe the context of 寺 in the manuscript.

The pictograph  has been identified as *ping* 坪, or the modern script 平 (flat or level) in “頌，平德也” (Ma 2001, 127). Huang Dekuan *et al* contend that 坪 should be identified as 塋 (2001, 127); other scholars note that it can also be glossed as *pu* 溥, *pang* 旁, and *guang* 廣 (all meaning big). The meaning of this pictograph has to be understood as an attribute of *de* 德 (virtue), thence 旁德 or 廣德 means

⁶⁴ 周禮·天官冢宰: “...以帥其屬而掌邦治” and in 地官司徒: “...以帥其屬而嗣掌其月” (Lau 1993, 1, 27). *The Rites of Zhou*, “Tianguan zhongzai”: ... to be in charge of the ministry and be in control of governing the state. “Diguan situ”: to be in charge of the ministry and be in control of the timing [of transactions]. Noteworthy is the meaning of *zhang* 掌 and the compounding of *sizhang* 嗣掌 as a term, which has the meaning of 持 or 寺 (to hold, control).

⁶⁵ See Ode 126 車鄰, 200 巷伯, 264 瞻卬.

⁶⁶ It is noted that Ye Shuxian has cited similar references in glossing the term 寺人, arguing that it meant the castrated, androgynous priest-administrators who were the very early “poets” of primeval times (1996, 147-52).

⁶⁷ 周禮·天官冢宰 “Tianguan zhongzai” of *The Rites of Zhou*: “寺人：掌王之內人及女宮之戒令...” (*si ren* [is the person] in charge of orders of the consorts and the female members in the palace (Lau 1998, 14).

⁶⁸ Although 寺 and 嗣 are both pronounced *si* in the modern vernacular, their archaic phonetics are different. They both belong to 之部 (the phonetic series of *zhi*), within which 寺 is categorised under 端母 (the *duan* ‘onset’, Karlgren calls it ‘initial’) whereas 嗣 belongs to 心母 (the *xin* onset) (He Linyi 1998, 43, 112). Phonetic loans between these phonemes are permissible as evidenced by an example in the *Shuowen jiezi* s.v.: “碓，舂也。從石，隹聲” and “睢，仰目也。從目，隹聲。” Both 碓 and 睢 are pronounced as *zhui* 隹 but 碓 belongs to the *duan* onset while 睢 belongs to the *xin* onset. Another possible phonetic loan is 治 of 定母之部 (the *ding* onset of the *zhi* series) (He Linyi 1998, 57).

great virtue (Cao Jianguo 2010, 48-9). Jiang Guanghui glosses it as 重 and renders 重德 as 累世之德 (the accumulated virtue [of the ancestral kings]) (2002a, Krause 2008, 53). Other possible readings include: 炳德 (bright virtue) (Xu Quansheng 2002, 371); 平和之德 (harmonious, unbiased virtue); 太平之德 (the virtue that brought peace); 平常之德 (ordinary virtue), and so on.⁶⁹ Huang Huaixin rejects all these and argues that 德 here refers to the characteristics of the “Song”. Thus 平德, Huang claims, describes the tranquil and harmonious characteristics of the *song* poems (2004, 237). Huang’s contention is that not all the *song* poems depict the theme of virtue thus 德 has to be interpreted as characteristics. Huang argues that similarly the expression 盛德 describing the “Daya” in the next sentence is about the lengthy characteristics of the poems. Whilst this is true, in that twenty-seven out of the thirty-one poems of the “Daya” boast more than five stanzas, it is doubtful if something so superficial would be worth commenting on by Confucius. The graph 德 can be read as virtue coherently within the text as the term *wangde* 王德 appears on slip 5 clearly referring to kingly virtue.

As Cao Jianguo aptly points out, 平德 and 盛德 both mean great or high virtue and there should be no difference between them (2010, 49). What can be ascertained is that the majority of both the *song* and *daya* poems extol the great virtue of the sage kings and Heaven;⁷⁰ it defies reasons to have to grade the virtue lauded merely because the poems come from different sections of the anthology. The distinction between 平 and 盛 is therefore simply a matter of rhetorical choice by the author.

Opinions are also divided on the meaning of 後 in the expression “多言後”. Liao Mingchun reads it as *hou* 厚 (fullness of virtue), but this reading repeats the notion of great virtue mentioned earlier and is thought to be an unnecessary repetition. Fan Yuzhou quotes the definition of 後 in the *Shuowen jiezi* as 遲 (drawn out or lingering), referring to the tempo of the music (quoted in Huang Huaixin 2004, 238) but this would be another collocational clash with the word 言 (to state) and

⁶⁹ In order to simplify the discussion, sources are not cited individually; Huang Huaixin has staged an excellent summary in his monograph (2004, 233-5).

⁷⁰ It is noted that some of the *daya* poems are not eulogies of the high virtue of the kings but lamentations of bad times and admonitions of perverse rulers. They are nonetheless the minority, and serve to reveal the absence of virtue.


pre-empt what is about to be discussed in the next sentence “其樂安而遲”. Furthermore 後 here should be a noun whereas 遲 and 厚 are adjectives. Many exegetes gloss it as the progenies of King Wen and King Wu 武王 (Ma 2001, 127; Huang Huaixin 2004, 239, Liu Xinfang 2003, 7-8). Krause renders it as “later times” (Krause 2008, 53). Chi and Zheng echo Li Ling in quoting three *Odes* in which the character 後 appears, claiming that it means profound thoughts that benefit later generations (垂範後世) (Chi 2004, 10-1).⁷¹ Reading 後 as progenies or later times is ambiguous: the sentence “頌，平德也，多言後” has yet to indicate the anteriority to which posteriority can be referenced: are *song* poems mainly talking about the descendants of the Zhou progenitor *Hou Ji* 后稷, or simply Kings Wen and Wu? Or are they referring to the times of Zhou after Shang (as Shang poems are also part of the “Song”), or the times after King Wen only? A cursory survey of the themes of the forty odes from the “Song” reveals that thirty-four relate to the Zhou kings, the dukes of Lu and the kings of the Shang, as ritual eulogies of, or prayers to, the kings and ancestral deities. On only six occasions have later generations⁷² been mentioned and the discourses are not prognostic; they cannot be counted as representing the majority. If 後 is taken to mean edifying examples for later generations, then too much meaning has to be imported into the word. In fact the verb 言 in 言後 simply means ‘talking about’ 後, and does not carry any connotation of bringing moral examples to bear on later generations. Jiang Guangfai asserts that 後 refers to *hou wang* 後王, more specifically King Wen, King Wu, and King Cheng 成王 (Jiang 2002a). Noteworthy is the fact that King Wen and King Wu are addressed as *er hou* 二后 (the two Kings) in Ode 271 昊天有成命.⁷³ As a generic term 后 means

⁷¹ See “克昌厥後” (ensuring prosperity to the descendants) in Ode 282 “Yong” 雝; “克開厥後” (Opening the path for the successors) in Ode 285 “Wu” 武, and “而戢後患” (I will be on my guard against future calamity) in Ode 289 “Xiaobi” 小毖.

⁷² The verse “子孫保之” (Blessed are the decedants) appears in Ode 269 “Liewen” 烈文 and Ode 270 “Tianzuo” 天作; “曾孫篤之” ([King Wen’s] remote decedents be favoured) in Ode 267 “Weitian zhiming” 維天之命. They are supplications to the ancestral deities rather than prophecies of later times. See also the three odes in note 71. However, “曾孫” is also a general term for the noble rank as opposed to mean future generations, see later discussion on the poem “Datian” 大田, slip 25.

⁷³ Ode 271 “Haotian you chengming” 昊天有成命: “昊天有成命，二后受之。” (Heaven made its determinate appointment / Which [our] two sovereigns received) (Legge 1994, 4:575). The two sovereigns were King Wen and King Wu.

‘ruler’ according to the *Shuowen jizi*.⁷⁴ Jiang Linchang quotes from ancient texts such as the *Liji* that 后 and 後 are interchangeable (2002, 109). If this is the correct reading, then 頌, 平德也, 多言后 can be rendered as: ‘The “Song” is about great virtue, mostly that of the [ancestral] kings.’

The music of the *song* odes is described as *an* 安 and 𠂔 (phonetic unknown); when they are sung they are found to be *shen* 紳 and 蓐. Scholars have generally accepted Ma Chengyuan’s reading of 𠂔 as *chi* 遲 (slow), but 紳 and 蓐 have been interpreted in other ways. Ma glosses 紳 as *xun* 壎 and 蓐 as *chi* 箎, which are wind instruments used to produce the music of the “Song” (Ma 2001, 127). The 壎 is an earthenware pipe and the 箎 is a kind of bamboo flute. However, 紳 and 蓐 should be adjectives here thus musical instruments seem to be syntactically problematic. Other scholars read 紳 as *shen* 伸 (extended)⁷⁵ which has a general following. The pictograph 蓐, an erstwhile unknown word originally written as , is made up of the radical *cao* 艸 (grass) and a component that cannot be identified with certainty: some suggest to read it as *zhi* 豸 (a worm), others prefer *yi* 易 or *niao* 鳥. Liu Xinfang observes that 豸 does not appear in the Chu system of pictographs and has only been seen once in *jinwen* 金文, thus instead of 豸 it should be read as 易 (2003, 8-9). Following this reading the graph is glossed as 易 (peaceful, as in the expression 和易), *ti* 惕 (respectful), and *dang* 蕩 (sweeping); otherwise as *niao* 萯, a type of creeping vine that connotes the idea of extending and stretching (Jiang Linchong 2002, 110). There are other variations such as: *yin* 引 (leading), *yi* 繹 (continuous), *di* 遞 (structured), *ti* 逖 (far) (Huang Huaixin 2004, 240), *xun* 尋 (long) (Zhou Fengwu 2002, 153). Huang Dekuan *et al* trace its root to *xun* 蓐 and by euphonic transfer, to *tan* 覃 (long) (Huang 2007, 87). The list of possible readings may not be exhaustive. I am inclined to follow Liu Xinfang’s reading of this graph as 易, as he points out that 易 can be found in the Guodian corpus (2003, 8-9) whose pictographic forms are reproduced as follows for comparison:

⁷⁴ *Shuowen jiezi* s.v. 說文解字后：繼體君也。象人之形。施令以告四方，故厂之。从一、口。發號者，君后也。(Hou means ‘king’. The pictograph takes the form of *ren*, issuing orders to all quarters.

⁷⁵ *Shuowen jiezi* s.v. 說文解字“紳”：“大帶也。”(a large-sized girdle) By extrapolation, *shen* 紳 may mean long and extended.



to be read as 易, slip 2 of ‘Kongzi shilun’



易, slip 5 of “Zundeyi” 尊德義 of the Guodian corpus



易, slip 36 of “Yucong 1” 語叢一 of the Guodian corpus



易, slip 23 of “Yucong 2” 語叢二 of the Guodian corpus



易, slip 24 of “Yucong 2” of the Guodian corpus

Thus “申而易” would seem to be the right description of the *song* choruses, as Fang Yurun observes, the music of the “Song” is “deep and soft ... unhurried and lingering, solemn and calm (頌音沉而柔... 沖融而雋永, 肅穆而沉靜)” (1986, 575). In Western music it is *adagio grazioso* (slow and graceful) as we know it today, a tempo that is most appropriate for ritual and religious music.

In the expression “至矣” the word 至 can be translated as the ultimate, the superlative, or the sublime. The context seems to suggest that it refers to the music, the tune and the thoughts as having reached the utmost (Krause 2008, 600).

Shangbo Transcription:

…也多言難而 意退者也衰矣少矣邦風丌内物也專 讐人谷安大魯材安
丌言旻丌聖善孔=曰佳能夫… 【3】




My Reading:



…小雅，德也…，多言難而怨懟者也，衰矣，小矣。邦風，其納物也博，觀人俗焉，大斂材焉。其言文，其聲善。孔子曰：唯能夫… 【3】

Translation:

[The “Xiaoya” is about ... virtue;] it mainly talks about difficult times with a sense of discontent and regret, [reflecting the] declining social conditions and the [rulers’] lack of virtue. The ‘Bangfeng’ embraces many things: it makes extensive observations of the social mores, manifesting the common people’s mundane bucolic life. Its lyrics are cultured; its tunes are pleasing. Confucius said, “If only ...” 【3】

Annotation:

According to the context, the missing words of the opening sentence can be filled with ‘...也’ (Huang Huaixin 2004, 242; Ma 2001, 129). For the same reason Pu Maozuo suggests that 少德 could be added (Pu 2002, 23) but it is felt that whilst 少 as an attribute of 德 is acceptable, the actual word to be inserted is less certain.⁷⁶

The pictographs  and  have been identified as *juan* 愾 (transcribed as 怨) and *tui* 退 (standing for *dui* 懟) respectively (Ma 2001, 129); both carry the meaning of discontent or regret. Other readings of 懟 include *zhang* 湛 (deep or thick), and *fei* 悱 (unspeakable). Li Rui reads the sentence as 多言難而怨, 退者也 in which 退 means *huigai* 悔改 (penitence) (2002, 399). Huang Huaixin lists over half of the seventy-four odes of the “Xiaoya” that evince a sense of discontent or regret arising from social decline and other difficult situations (2004, 243-5). Quoting textual precedents, Cao Jianguo argues that 怨懟 should be read as *yuanwei* 怨蔚, both meaning *bing* 病 (difficulty rather than illness) (2010, 57). Liu Xinfang claims that 難 here refers to 問難 (demanding an answer) whereas 退 should be read as-is and not 懟. By 退 he suggests that it means to reduce; 怨退 as a binome means to denounce the rulers’ lack of virtue (2003, 13). However, 怨懟 should best be glossed as discontent in terms of the context.

Ma Chengyuan asserts that 衰 refers to the degenerating social conditions and 小 refers to the lack of virtue on the part of the ruler, which were situations reflected in many of the poems of the “Xiaoya” (2001, 129). Chi and Zheng consider 小 to be a reference to the limitation of poetic themes (2004, 9) and Huang Huaixin suggests that it meant the short lengths of the *xiaoya* odes. Krause’s interpretation of 小 is “pettiness” (2008, 60) which may be pointing to the shrunk poetic compass when compared to the august “Song”. The transcription and interpretation adopted here is 怨懟 (discontent).

⁷⁶ Recorded in another Shangbo bamboo slip (but not part of “Kongzi shilun”) is the text “少雅德之少德者也” (the “Xiaoya” is about the dissipation of virtue) (Ma 2002, 129).

The ‘Guofeng’ was originally known as the ‘Bangfeng’; the change was brought about by taboo during the Han as the Emperor was named 邦 Bang (Ma 2001, 129). Ma asserts that 溥 stands for 普 (both pronounced as *pu*); Li Ling reads 溥 as *bo* 博, both mean ‘wide’ or ‘extensive’. Pang Pu suggests a differently punctuated reading: 其納物也溥，觀人俗焉 (2002, 236), but the overall meaning of the sentences has not changed significantly.

The expression *liancai* 斂材 has attracted widely different interpretations. The term was a local government post of the Zhou, filled by people from the lower class known as *shenqie* (臣妾) as workers responsible for the collection of vegetables, fruits and edible plant roots.⁷⁷ The word 斂 means ‘to collect’ and 材 means ‘the materials collected’. Ma takes the view that “大斂材” metaphorically refers to the masterpieces of the poems collected in the ‘*Bangfeng*’, reinforcing the idea that the *feng* poems were collected by officials of the royal court (2001, 130). Wang Zhiping echoes Ma but reads 斂材 as 斂采, the act of collecting poetry (2002, 211). Liu Xinfang reads *da* 大 as a verb meaning ‘to elevate’ and 材 includes both materials, information and talents, which can be written as *cai* 才. Liu claims that when materials or information (for instance, knowledge of fauna and flora as Confucian has once mentioned)⁷⁸ and talented people were depicted in the poems, the “Feng” produces a composite picture of social life (2003, 17). Whilst the *feng* poems are rich in their depiction of things, only on a few occasions does it single out people’s talent as a theme.⁷⁹ Huang Huaixin’s interpretation is simply that the “Feng” has collected a large amount of information (2004, 249). Cao Jianguo argues that 材 (materials) stands for 才 (talented people) quoting “取賢斂才” (selecting the virtuous and assembling the talented) in “King Wen as son and heir” of the *Liji*. Cao examines in detail the education system of the Zhou and claims that Confucius emphasizes the utility function of the *feng* poems of assembling talented people. Whilst the “Song”

⁷⁷ “Diguan dasitu” of *The Rites of Zhou* 周禮地官·大司徒: “Twelve offices are instituted in the cities and districts of the state to serve the people, the first is the office of agriculture ... the eighth is the office of produce collection ... (頒職事十有二于邦國都鄙，使以登萬民：一曰稼穡...八曰斂材...)”. Also see “Tienguan zhongzai” 天官冢宰: “Instituting nine posts to serve the people, the eighth is *shenqie* [responsible for] collecting green groceries... 以九職任萬民：...八曰臣妾，聚斂疏材...”

⁷⁸ See *Analects* 17.9.

⁷⁹ For instance, Ode 106 “Yijie” 猗嗟 praises the artistry of an archer but such themes are few.

depicts ritual occasions and kingly virtue, Cao claims, the “Feng” depicts the virtue of individuals. Despite Cao’s impelling argument he has yet to establish the connection between the assemblage of the talented and the “Feng”. Cao quotes *Liji* to prove that the *Odes* as a whole was part of the curriculum in the imperial academy but of all the evidence quoted; there is no direct reference to the “Feng” in particular being used to assemble talented people (2010, 49-56). By his own admission, the selection or appointment of the talented was only an ideology rather than the practice during the Zhou (2010, 55). That the *Odes* is a pedagogic tool is surely a Confucian tradition, but being an instrument of instruction is not the same as a mechanism for assembling and recommending the talented to take public office, which is certainly the work of the educational institutions and not the *Odes*, or the “Feng” in particular.

Huang Huaixin’s interpretation of “大斂材” as a large collection of materials within the “Feng” might be the simple and relevant answer. Liu Xinfang touches upon the salient point that the “Feng” depicts an important element of the social life at the time but the argument might have to be restated. If 大 is read as a verb as Liu has suggested, it would literally mean ‘aggrandising’, which can be understood as ‘manifesting’ within its context. As 斂材 refers to the lower echelon of the society involving in the collection of produce from farms or in the wild, it could symbolically stand for the quotidian and bucolic life of the common people, a theme that the “Bangfeng” foregrounds. This reading is underscored by the reference of *jianmin* 賤民 (common people) on slip 4.

Literally “其聲善” means ‘its sound is well-meant’ or as Krause puts it, “its voices [are] kind” (2008, 60). When *sheng* 聲 is mentioned in the *Analects* it is understood to refer to the music or the tune rather than the lyrics of the poems.⁸⁰ Yang Jun 楊隽 claims that the moral of “Guofeng” is the actualization of *li* through imagery and symbolism. During the *dianyue* 典樂 (ceremonial receptions) of Zhou times *feng* poems were sung accompanied by music, and dances were performed when participants savoured the moral messages of the pieces (2007, 1-4). However, according to “Xiangyin jiuli” in the *Yili* 儀禮·鄉飲酒禮, the *ya* poems and the

⁸⁰ *Analects* 15.11: “放鄭聲…鄭聲淫…” (Banish the tunes of Cheng.... The tunes of Cheng are wanton...) *Analects* 17.18: “惡鄭聲之亂雅樂也” (I detest the tunes of Cheng for corrupting classical music.) (Lau 1992b, 151, 177)

music were also sung and played on those occasions.⁸¹ If 善 means the morals of the *dianyue* pieces then it should not be referring to the *feng* poems alone but also the *song* and the *ya* odes. Without over-reading the text the interpretation adopted for “其聲善” is: ‘its tunes are pleasing’.

Shangbo Transcription:

…曰詩丌猷坪門■與戔民而饒之丌甬心也廼可女曰邦風氏也■民之又
慙惹也卡=之不和者丌甬心也廼可女…【4】

My Reading:

…[孔][子]曰：詩其猷平門，與戔民而豫之，其用心也將何如？曰：邦風是也。民
之有感患也，上下之不和者，其用心也將何如？曰：[小][雅][是][也]。…【4】

Translation:

… [Confucius] said, “The *Odes* is like an enormous door. It allows the common people [to let themselves out] freely.” How do they put their mind to speaking out [freely]? [I] say, it is all in the “Bangfeng”. When the people have grievances, or when conflicts arise between superiors and subordinates, how do they put their mind to speaking out [freely]? [I say] it is all in the “Xiaoya”....” 【4】



Annotation:

Slip 4 is another *liubajian*, the blank spaces of which can be filled by adding ‘孔子’ before 曰 at the beginning and ‘曰：小雅是也’ at the end of the slip, in conformity to the textual format of parallel discourses. Thus the first half of this slip contains commentary on the “Bangfeng” and the other on the “Xiaoya”. Jiang Linchang does not make this differentiation and treats the commentary as a whole to be on “Bangfeng” (2002, 112).⁸² Li Ling suggests that there may be a missing slip

⁸¹ The *ya* poems or music sung or played during such occasions include: Ode 161 “Luming” 鹿鳴, Ode 162 “Simu” 四牡, Ode 163 “Hunaghuang zhehua” 皇皇者華, Ode 170 “Yuli” 魚麗, Ode 171 “Nanyou jiayu” 南有嘉魚, Ode 172 “Nanshan youtai” 南山有臺 etc. There are also titles which cannot be found in the received text of the *Shijing*.

⁸² One may query the insertion of 小雅 here despite the clear rhetorical pattern suggesting nothing otherwise is appropriate. However, the “Xiaoya” is known to express people’s grievances and disharmony (民之有感患也，上下之不和者) not found in the other sections of the *Odes*. Sima



that should follow this slip (2002, 40). The bamboo text shows a punctuation mark after the graph 門, but there are doubts if it is an inscription error; if it were then the sentence should read 詩其猷平門歟？賤民而豫之……。 On this point scholars consider it indeterminate (Liu Xinfang 2003, 18) but my reading is based on the text as punctuated and *yu* 與 is taken to mean ‘give’.


The previously identified graph 坪 appears here in a slightly different from , with the short horizontal stroke on the lower right moved to the top. The previously glossed meanings are all relevant and likewise it has to be interpreted in conjunction with the word *men* 門 (door or gateway). Ma Chengyuan notes that *pingmen* 平門 may refer to the name of the city gate in the Warring State of Wu 吳, but adds that within the context it may simply refer to a wide gateway (2001, 130). Other readings include *guangmen* 廣門, *pangmen* 滂門 or 旁門 (a wide doorway or gateway); 平門 (a door neither too big nor too small for everybody’s access); *fangmen* 坊門 or 防門 (a door to deny access of the evil or evil influence); but 防門 may also refer to a gateway of a protective dyke of a walled city (Li Rui 2002, 398-9 and Chi 2004, 9). Still others propound the idea of *hengmen* 衡門 or 橫門 (a door that eases traffic congestion), and *zhongmen* 重門 (a door to admit the good and ward off the evil). Huang Huaixin believes that it should be read as 平門 and glosses it as the categorization or divisions of the *Odes* (2004, 256). reads it as *shengmen* 聲門 (larynx) with the explanation that the *Odes*, as the voice of the heart, are a doorway to the soul (cited in Huang Huaixin 2004, 254); similarly Jiang Linchang regards 門 as the human mouth or the channel for voicing concerns (2002, 113). Liao Mingchun interprets it as *pangwen* 旁聞 (vast information source) referring it to the rich content of the *Odes* (quoted in Huang Huaixin 2004, 253-6).⁸³ It is felt that the key to the text lies not in the adjective describing the door or gateway but in the door or gateway itself, which can be understood metaphorically as a means or an avenue of poetic expression. The pictograph  as an attribute modifying such an avenue

Qian’s comments are relevant: “小雅怨誹而不亂” (The “Xiaoya” expresses discontent in controlled measures) 屈原賈生列傳 (Sima n.d., 185), and “大雅言王公大人而德逮黎庶，小雅譏小己之得失” (The “Daya” depicts the great virtue of kings and dukes benefiting the common people, the “Xiaoya” lampoons one’s own vicissitudes) 司馬相如列傳 (Sima n.d., 251) – my translations.

⁸³ As summarized by Huang.

would naturally subsume meanings of width and levelness, implying easiness and freedom of expression.

Ma Chengyuan glosses  as *jian* 𡗗, which is equivalent to 賤 (lowly) but declares  (transcribed as 𡗗) an unknown word (2001, 131). Liao Mingchun reads 𡗗 as 踐 and then *shan* 善 by phonetic borrowing, and 𡗗 as *yu* 裕 (abundant) and reads the sentence as 善民而裕之 (be amicable to the people and make them abundantly provisioned for) (2004a, 75). However, he does not explain how this reading is relevant to the context of the *Odes* or “Bangfeng”. In fact the *feng* poems explicated in the manuscript do not seem to embrace such a theme. Other scholars read 𡗗 as *can* 殘, or *zei* 賊, both meaning to hurt; or *jian* 漸 (to imbue) (Li Rui 2002, 399), all of which, as attributes of *min* 民 (people) seem far removed from the contents of the *Odes*. Cao Jianguo asserts that 𡗗 should be read as it is, for it means ‘less’ or ‘little’ (2009, 55). Thus 𡗗民 and 賤民 synonymously refer to lowly or common people echoing the earlier depiction of them as 斂材 on slip 3. This interpretation has a general following and is thus adopted for the purpose of translation here.

A closer look at the pictograph  reveals that it is made up of the radical *gu* 谷 (谷) and the component *xiang* 象 (𡗗) rather than *tu* 兔 (𡗗), whilst 谷 could have been a variant of *yu* 予 (𡗗). More scholars now prefer to read it as *yu* 豫 (pleasant), which stands for *yu* 裕 as mentioned earlier, or *yi* 逸 (leisurely) which is Chen Tongshen’s reading (2004, 259), *yuan* 怨 (discontent), *juan* 燭 (bright), and *juan* 捐 (abandon). The last three readings do not collocate semantically with the rest of the sentence but 裕, 豫 and 逸 connote easiness and freedom of action, which befit the context.

The term *yongxin* 用心 was a common expression during pre-Qin times, meaning ‘to exert or apply one’s mind to a cause’.⁸⁴ Ma’s reading of *bajuan* 罷倦 has been queried by scholars who prefer to read it as *qieyuan* 竊怨 (personal

⁸⁴ See *Analects* 17.22: Confucius said, “The man whose belly is full all day and who does not put his mind to some use (…飽食終日，無所用心…)” (Lau 1992b, 178-9); the *Xunzi* 1.6: “... its mind is fixed on a constant end (用心一也)” (Knoblock 1988, 1:138).

discontent), or *puhuan* 痛患 (sickness) but the general consensus is *qihuan* 感患 (grievance) (Huang Huaixin 2004, 259).

The graph 卡 is marked as a combined word for *shangxia* 上下 which Krause translates as “upper classes” and “lower classes” (2008, 60). This may be literally correct but factually debatable. The disharmony aired in the *xiaoya* poems were not motivated by class struggles in the modern sense of the term but were mostly complaints against one’s peers or superiors including atrocious sovereigns, wicked ministers, incompetent officials, or simply the establishment in general.⁸⁵ However, as the source text does not spell out such distinctions, ‘superiors and subordinates’ would appear to be a better translation of 上下 than ‘upper and lower classes’.

Shangbo Transcription:

…氏也又城工者可女曰訟氏也一清甯王惠也■至矣敬宗甯之豐呂為刀
沓秉旻之惠呂為刀黷■肅雝 …【5】

My Reading:

…者何如？曰：大雅是也。有成功者何如，曰：頌是也。清廟，王德也，

至矣。敬宗廟之禮，以為其本，秉文之德，以為其質。“肅雝顯相…”

【5】

Translation:

…[How...I say, it is all in the “Daya”]. How do those who have great achievements speak their mind? [I] say, it is all in the “Song”. “**Qingmiao**” speaks of kingly virtue. It is supreme: [the celebrants] took revering the rituals of the ancestral temples to be

⁸⁵ Examples of such poems are: the implied author of Ode 185 “Qifu” 祈父 was a royal guard satirizing an incompetent war minister. Ode 198 “Qiaoyan” 巧言 is about a minister satirizing his traducer. Ode 200 “Xiangbo” 巷伯 was signed off by a eunuch whose castration was the punishment brought about by slanderers. The implied author of Ode 204 “Siyue” 四月 was an exiled minister. The implied author of Ode 205 “Beishan” 北山 was a petty officer complaining against the establishment for being unfairly treated. Ode 219 “Qingying” 青蠅 is about a minister’s complaint to the King for having been slandered.

their essential duty, and the adoption of King Wen's virtue to be their attribute. "Respectful and harmonious [were the celebrants....]"⁸⁶ 【5】

Annotation:

The ancient graph 又 often stands for 有, which is what Ma Chengyuan has identified here. Li Rui and Liao Mingchun both read it as *you* 侑 (to conduct sacrificial rituals, or to repay or reward) (Li 2002, 399) but as Huang Huaixin points out, 侑 has not been seen in ancient texts to mean conducting sacrificial rituals, and that 侑成功 (repay success) is semantically not permissible. It is reasonable to assume that the sentence “有成功者何如” is an ellipsis of 有成功者其用心將何如, following the rhetorical pattern of previous discourses (2004, 260-1). Here the “Song” is collocated with 成功, a notion that is also explicated in the “Great preface”:

頌者，美盛德之形容，以其成功告於神明者也。

The Sung [“Song”] is so called, because they praise the embodied forms of complete virtue, and announce to the spiritual Beings its grand achievements. (Legge 1994, 4:36)

There is a major break mark after the discussion of the “Song”. The verse “秉文之德” is the fourth verse of “Qingmiao” (Ode 266), “肅雍…” is the second verse, to which ‘顯相’ can be inserted. Ma Chengyuan identifies 黌 as *ye* 業 (enterprise) (2001, 132); Li Ling reads it as *zhi* 質 (quality) having regard to similar graphs found in the Guodian corpus (2002, 41); Zhou Fengwu glosses it as *nie* 蘖 (sprouting from regrowth) (2002, 158). However, it is felt that virtue cannot be practiced as an enterprise therefore 業 does not seem to be a good interpretation. According to Chi and Zheng 蘖 implies that King Wen's kingdom had once discontinued before regrowing which was historically not the case (2004, 18). Among these readings 質 seems to make the best sense, as it is a parallel to 本. However, as 質 has to be upheld or put into practice (秉), it cannot be rendered as one's innate quality or nature. The closest translation is perhaps ‘attribute’.

⁸⁶ ‘相’ has been traditionally glossed as the assistant celebrants (Fang Yurun 1986, 577). Huang Huaixin propounds that it meant the chief celebrant presiding over the ritual (Huang 2004, 216)

Huang Huaixin supports Li Xueqin’s idea to place slip 1 after slip 5 thus the reading becomes: “…敬宗廟之禮，以為其本，秉文之德，以為其質。肅雍顯相…【5】行此者其有不王乎？…【1】”。Huang argues that 王 is a verb that means ‘to rule’, and “行此者其有不王乎” actually refers to King Wu vanquishing King Zhou 紂王 of the Shang (2004, 265). However this reading is untenable: firstly the text does not show any endophoric reference to King Wu. Secondly, King Wu’s campaign can hardly be read coherently with the temple scene of ritual celebrants portrayed in “Qingmiao”. Thus this reading has not been adopted.

Shangbo Transcription:

… 襄尔累惠害城胃之也又命自天命此文王城命之也 ■ 信矣 ■ 孔 = 曰 此命也夫 ■ 文王佳谷已寻虐此命也…【7】

My Reading:

…“帝謂文王，予懷爾明德”，曷？誠謂之也。“有命自天，命此文王”，誠命之也，信矣！孔子曰：“此命也夫！文王唯善也，得乎？此命也！…”【7】

Translation:

…“[God said to King Wen, I] appreciate your resplendent virtue.” What does it mean? It means King Wen’s sincerity. “The favouring appointment was from Heaven, / Giving the throne to our king Wen”. King Wen was appointed because of his sincerity. Confucius said, “This is a providential mandate! King Wen made perfect his own virtue, but could [that alone make him king? No.] This had to be a providential appointment.”【7】

Annotation:

This is a *liubaijian* with a broken tip and blank spaces. The bamboo text “懷爾明德” has shed new light on the perplexing couplet “帝謂文王、予懷明德” of the received Ode 241 “Huangyi” 皇矣. A literal translation of this verse is: ‘God said to King Wen, “I have bright virtue…”’ (Pang 2001, 234) in which 予 means ‘I’, God the speaker. Scholars in the past have found this puzzling, as it sounds like God is








justifying his virtue to King Wen. Exegetical authorities like Zheng Xuan thought it necessary to gloss *huai* 懷 as *gui* 歸, meaning ‘to appreciate’ (2001a, 27),⁸⁷ to which Chi Hsiu-sheng adds that 歸 means *kui* 餽 (give). In Chi’s words 予懷明德 is ‘I give you bright virtue’ (2004, 19). Whilst this interpretation is circuitous, the bamboo text “懷爾明德” ([I] appreciate your bright virtue) would seem to be a more logical and direct expression. It also conforms to the rhetorical pattern of the ensuing verses: “詢爾仇方、同爾兄弟、以爾鈞援、與爾臨衝 …” (Take measures against the country of your foes, / Along with your brethren, / Get ready your scaling ladders, / And your engines of onfall and assault....) (Legge 1994, 4:454) This has prompted Pang Pu to suggest that the transmitted text 予懷明德 could have been corrupted and the original verse could have been 懷爾明德 (2002, 233-4). Liao Mingchun and Li Rui propose to replicate what has been quoted in the *Mozi* “予懷而明德” by inserting 予 before “懷爾明德” of the bamboo text (Liao 2001a, 273; Li 2001, 126-9).

The couplet “有命自天，命此文王” (The favouring appointment was from Heaven, / Giving the throne to our king Wen.) (Legge 1994, 4:435) is quoted from Ode 236 “Daming” 大明. Ma Chengyuan glosses 玆 as 城 and notes that it is a loan word for *cheng* 誠 (sincerity) (2001, 134). The rhetorical pattern of 誠□之也, not previously seen in transmitted texts according to Pang Pu, can now be found in the “Wuxing” of the excavated silk script of Mawangdui.⁸⁸ Having regard to the context of the “Wuxing” in which “誠舉之也” and “誠事之也” appear, Pang concludes that 誠 also denotes sincerity in the “Kongzi shilun”, thence ‘God sincerely said so’ and ‘God sincerely appointed [King Wen]’ (2001, 234). The question is: does God, the embodiment of the highest virtue, need his sincerity justified and advocated? Liao Mingchun reads sincerity as the attribute of King Wen, modifying what God says about bright virtue in “誠謂之也”, and as the reason for his anointment in “誠命之

⁸⁷ The *Shuowen jiezi* s.v. “懷” glosses the word as *si* 思 (to consider) and 歸 as the marriage (of a woman). The *Shiming* 釋名 s.v. “懷” defines it and 歸 as ‘to return’. See the Chinese Text Project hub (<http://ctext.org/shi-ming?searchu=%E6%AD%B8>).

⁸⁸ The “Wuxing” silk manuscript was discovered in 1973 and has been dated to mid-third century B.C. (Riegel 1997, 144). As such it is more or less coeval with “Kongzi shilun” in term of the dating of the artifact but not necessarily the date of inditement. “Wuxing” is also found in the Guodian bamboo corpus. The Mawangdui silk manuscript comprises the main text and the commentary, whereas the Guodian manuscript has only the main text which is largely similar to the Mawangdui text (Chen Wei 2009, 180).

也” (2001a, 28-9). An alternative reading of “誠謂之也” is ‘God truly said this’ which is the interpretation adopted by Krause (2008, 59). The parallel usage of 誠 found in the *Mencius* 1.A.6: “誠如是也” (This being truly the case) (Lau 2003, 12-3) can probably be cited as support. For translation purposes it can be interpreted as the familiar rhetoric found in the Gospel of John: “Truly, truly I say to you”.⁸⁹ However, the context seems to justify a moralistic approach thus Liao’s reading is adopted – ‘It means King Wen’s sincerity... King Wen was appointed because of his sincerity.’

The graph  has been identified as 害 which, as Ma Chengyuan points out, stands for *he* 曷 (how or why) by way of *tongjia* (2001, 135). Liao Mingchun reads it as *he* 何 (2001a, 39) but this does not change its nature or meaning as an interrogative adjective. Ma glosses  as *wei* 唯 (only) and  as *gu* 谷, to be read as *yu* 裕 (generous) (2001, 135). Pang Pu and others read  as *sui* 雖 (even though), and 谷 as *yu* 欲 (desire) (Pang 2002, 235; Huang 2004, 231; Qiu 2005, 866, 921). The graph  is recognized as *yi* 已 (already) and is readily distinguishable from , which stands for *ye* 也. Some commentators consider 已 to be an inscription error for 也, which is not uncommon in silk and bamboo texts. As *xuci* 虛詞 (function words), 也 or 已 makes little difference to the meaning of the sentence; only when 已 is used as a verb which means stop, then the interpretation is entirely different. Thus 文王雖欲也/已...can be translated either as ‘even though King Wen desired [to be king]...’, or if 已 is read as a verb that means ‘to stop or to discontinue’, then the translation is ‘even though King Wen did not want [to be king]’ Liu Xinfang rules out the reading of *gu* 谷 as *yu* 欲 (wish), for King Wen’s aspirations to build an empire were quite explicit (instead of being just a wish) in view of his planned expeditions against the neighbouring clans as recorded in the *Shiji* (2003, 10). Liu asserts that  is made up of the radical *kou* 口 (mouth) and the component *zuo* 作 (to do), a graph that is commonly found in Chu texts as *wei* 唯 (only). Liu reads 谷 as *qiong* 窮 (in a state of predicament) in line with the scholia on 谷 explicating “進退維谷” of Ode 257 “Sangrou” 桑柔 of the “Daya”. The term 維谷, Liu argues,

⁸⁹ John 5:24 (NRSV)

refers to King Wen's imprisonment at Youli 羑里 (before he became king and was then known as Xibo 西伯) by King Zhou 紂王. Liu further claims that King Wen's predicament was regarded by God as great virtue and he was thus awarded the mandate of Heaven (2003, 10). If the *Shiji* is anything to go by, it portrays King Wen (Xibo) quietly cultivating his virtue and doing good deeds after being released by King Zhou (“西伯歸，乃陰修德行善”) (Sima n.d., 6). It appears that King Wen had not been credited as being righteous simply because of his predicament or incarceration, thus in the absence of more reliable historical evidence Liu's reading lacks support.

Quoting Ruan Yuan's 阮元 (1764-1849) detailed study of the word 谷 in various contexts including the line “進退維谷” from Ode 257, Sin Chow Yiu 單周堯 affirms that 谷 stands for *gu* 穀 (good)⁹⁰ by way of phonetic borrowing, which in turn means *shan* 善 (virtue), as seen in the *Yanzi chunqiu* 晏子春秋 and the *Hanshi waizhuan*. Sin asserts that “文王唯谷” does not refer to King Wen's imprisonment, nor does it necessarily relate to “進退唯谷” of Ode 257, but “文王唯谷” can be clearly glossed as 文王唯善 (2003, 666-7). Sin adds that 唯谷 could be the vernacular of the time but having explicated the meaning of the word he has left the interpretation of the sentence open. I propose to interpret 唯谷 or 唯善 in terms of the more or less coeval text in the *Mencius* 7.A.9: “窮則獨善其身，達則兼善天下” (In obscurity a man makes perfect his own person, but in prominence he makes perfect the whole Empire as well) (Lau 2003, 288-9). I would argue that 唯善 is another way of saying 獨善其身 and 兼善天下, or in Sima Qian's words “陰修德行善” as noted above. Thus “文王唯善也，得乎？此命也” can be rendered as: ‘King Wen made perfect his own virtue, but could [that alone make him king? No.] This had to be a providential appointment.’

⁹⁰ Examples of 穀 meaning good abound: Ode 196 “Xiao Wan” 小宛: “教誨爾子、式穀似之。” (Teach and train your sons, / And they will become good as you are...); “握粟出卜、自何能穀。” (With a handful of grain I go out and divine, / How I may be able to become good.) Ode 207 小明: “神之聽之、式穀以女。” (So shall the Spirits hearken to you, / And give you good) (Legge 1994, 4:334-5, 366)

2. The *Ya* 雅 Poems

Shangbo Transcription:

十月善諱言 ■ 雨亡政 ■ 即南山皆言上之衰也王公恥之少旻多忝 = 言不中志者也少翦丌言不亞少又慙安少亶考言則言謹人之害也 ■ 【8 part】

My Reading:

十月[之交]善諱言。雨無政、節南山，皆言上之衰也，王公恥之。小旻多疑矣，言不中志者也，小宛其言不惡，少有悖焉。小弁、巧言，則言誣人之害也。【8 part】


Translation:

“**Shiyue zhijiao**” is about artful criticism. “**Yu wu zhen**” and “**Jie nan shan**” both portray the ruling class whose depravities [some] aristocrats considered vile. “**Xiaomin**” is sceptical, as it queries the integrity of the policy makers. The language of “**Xiaowan**” is not invective, but it expresses a touch of trepidation. “**Xiaobian**” and “**Qiaoyan**” depict the harm caused by traducers. 【8 part】

Annotation:

The odes mentioned on this slip are taken from the “Xiaoya”. Confucius’ comments on them reveal a range of human feelings including scepticism, shame, agitation and treachery provoked by external stimuli.

“Shiyue” (十月[之交] Ode 193)

“Shiyue” 十月 is the title mentioned in the manuscript corresponding to “Shiyue zhijiao” 十月之交 of the received text. Ma Chengyuan identifies  as *bei* 諱, adding that this graph cannot be found in the *Shuowen jiezi* but can be glossed as *pian* 諱, as in *shan pianyan* 善諱言 (skilful in cunning words) found in the “Speech of the Marquis of Qin” of the *Zhoushu* 周書·秦誓 (2001, 136). Li Xueqin reads the graph as 譬 (metaphoric) and glosses 善譬言 as a critique on the poem being full of metaphors (2005, 248). One may argue that whilst this poem is full of metaphors, it is equally true for most other poems. Li Ling points out that there is no need to read 諱 as 諱, for 諱言 means *beizi zhiyan* 諱訾之言 (slandorous talks) (2002, 36). Hu

Pingsheng assumes that the author's critique of the poem is not meant to be depreciating, in that 諛言 does not mean slanderous talks. He prefers to read 諛 as *bei* 卑 (humble), and 卑言 means talks by the plebeian (2002, 281). Liao Mingchun asserts that “善諛言” describes “Shiyue zhijiao” as demonstrative of artful criticism of one's liege lord (2002b, 9). The view held by the “Little preface” that this poem is a burlesque of Kings You of Zhou 周幽王 (795-771 BCE) has long been dismissed, as Huangfu 皇父 is named and criticized in the text. The poet has also identified himself in the poem as an officer of a lower rank.⁹¹ Huang Huaixin points out that the tone of the poem is not slanderous (2004, 160). Fang Yurun highly commends this poem as a paradigm for the *Spring and Autumn Annals* (1986, 396), which is well known for the subtlety of its critical style, in that the poem excels in critiquing, thus underlining the reading of 諛言 as criticism.


“Yu wu zhen” (雨無政 Ode 194) and “Jie nan shan” (節南山 Ode 191)

Quoting the commentaries from the “Minor Preface” (sic)⁹² on “Yu wu zheng” 雨無政 and “Jie nan shan” 節南山, Ma Chengyuan concludes that these poems portray the fall of the Zhou regime and the concomitant social turmoil (2001, 136). Huang Huaixin observes that the poets were most likely aristocrats reprehending their remissive peers and superiors (2004, 160-1). Yu Zhihui 俞志慧 posits that the poets might be members of the officialdom rather than the noble hierarchy, on the premise that “王公恥之” (by implication, the confessional tone of ‘the lords detest such things’ seems to suggest that the poet was a lord himself as if shame is personal feeling unbeknown to others) could have been an inscription error for 王公之恥 (the judgemental tone of ‘these things bring shame on the lords’ is suggestive of the poet being an outsider of the patrician circle) (2002, 312). Be that as it may, in the absence of substantive evidence the original text “王公恥之” is adopted.

⁹¹ The criticism goes: “抑此皇父、豈曰不時。胡為我作、不即我謀…” (This Huang-fu, / Will not acknowledge that he is acting out of season. / But why does he call us to action…) Indication of the poet's identity can be found in these verses: “黽勉從事、不敢告勞” (I have exerted myself to discharge my service, / And do not dare to make a report of my toils.) (Legge 1994, 4:323-4)

⁹² As Liu Xinfang points out, what Ma has quoted were verses from the poem and not from the “Little preface” (2002, 153).

“Xiaomin” (小旻 Ode 195)

The graph  has been identified as *yi* 疑 but the word combination sign appearing below this graph has prompted Ma Chengyuan to insert the function word *yi* 矣 (2001, 136). Li Ling proposes to read 疑 twice: 小旻多疑，疑言不中志者也. Both Ma and Li quote the following lines from “Xiaomin”:

謀夫孔多	The counsellors are very many,
是用不集	But on that account nothing is accomplished.
發言盈庭	The speakers fill the court,
誰敢執其咎	But who dares to take on any responsibility?


(Legge 1994, 4:331; modified)

Li adds that these verses depict the untruthful words of the counsellors (2002, 36). Wang Weihui 汪維輝 proposes to read 疑矣 as *yixin* 疑心 (suspicious mind) (2002), a reading that is contended by Huang Huaixin who maintains that the poem is about suspicions rather than a suspicious mind (2004, 161). Liao Mingchun reads *zhong* 中 as *zhong* 忠 (loyalty) (2002, 262). Liu Xinfang suggests to read 疑 as *ni* 擬 (allusions and metaphors) and 言 as plans, contending that 小旻多擬，擬言不中志者也 means that “Xiaomin” is full of metaphors, in that this poem alludes to people who are indecisive with their plans (2003, 42). However, as noted before commentaries suggesting that a certain poem is full of metaphors lacks critical specificity. Huang Huaixin suggests that the poet is suspicious of the policies of the people in power (2004, 164).

Chao Fulin proposes a different reading: 小旻多疑，疑，言不中志者也 and maintains that 疑 does not mean suspicions but *yilu* 疑慮 (worries caused by doubts). Chao believes that the author intends to emphasize the contextual meaning of the word before defining it as “言不中志” (2002c, 57). A close reading of the poem reveals that the poet speaks in no uncertain terms the crooked plans of the King’s counsels⁹³ rather than doubting the poor quality of their advice; thus the poem expresses scepticism more than suspicions. Ma’s reading of “小旻多疑矣，言不中志者也” is preferred over other readings; duplicating the word 疑 in the sentence is not a necessity for creating what the sentence is intended to mean.

⁹³ The verses “謀猶回遹，何日斯沮” ([The king’s] counsels and plans are crooked and bad; - / When will he stop [in the course]?) (Legge 1994, 4:330) indicate the poet’s scepticism of the poor advice given to the King rather than suspicions of the credibility of such advice.

“Xiaowan” (小宛 Ode196)

Ma Chengyuan identifies the graph  as 恚 in the sentence 少有□焉, but declares the word unknown (2001, 136). Much research has been conducted into glossing 恚 with the majority of views favouring five possible readings. Li Ling agrees with Ma that the graph is made up of 年 and 心, to be read as *ning* 佞, which means *bons mots*. Taking the traditional view that “Xiaowan” is a poem criticizing King You of Zhou, Li observes that “其言不惡，少有佞焉” means that the words of the poem are not malicious and its criticism diplomatic (2002, 36).

He Linyi argues that 恚 should be correctly read as 恚, which is the alternative written form of *ren* 仁 (benevolence), a notion that is expressed in the line “哀我填寡、宜岸宜獄” (Alas for the distressed and the solitary, / Deemed fit inmates for the prisons.) (Legge 1994, 4:335; He 2002, 247) Zhou Fengwu considers the graphic construction to be 恚 and reads it by way of phonetic borrowing as *wei* 危 (danger) (2002, 159), which means admonition, as it is said in the last stanza of “Xiaowan”:


惴惴小心	We must be anxious and careful
如臨于谷	As if we were on the brink of a valley.
戰戰兢兢	We must be apprehensive and cautious,
如履薄冰	As if we were treading upon thin ice.

(Legge 1994, 4:335)


Yang Zesheng 楊澤生 agrees to the graphic make-up of 恚 but glosses it as *guo* 過 (excess or fault) or *huo* 禍 (woe). Interpreting the poem as a means to reprove the king or to admonish one's brothers, Yang explains that “其言不惡，少有過焉” could mean the poet's language, although mild, is regarded as beyond the pale, or bordering on being indelicate (2003).⁹⁴ Alternatively “其言不惡，少有禍焉” could mean that the poet, by using mild remonstrative language, tried not to commit *lèse majesté* with intending to escape woes.

Liu Xinfang agrees to reading 恚 as 危, but glosses it to mean *gao* 高 (loftiness) which in turn connotes a sense of impracticality. Liu observes that it is not

⁹⁴ Yang quotes the lines “彼昏不知、壹醉日富” (But those who are benighted and ignorant, / Are devoted to drink, and more so daily) and “夙興夜寐、無忝爾所生” (Rising early and going to sleep late, / Do not disgrace those who gave you birth) (Legge 1994, 4:333) the tone of which Yang considers to be ‘excessively’ indelicate.

practical, by Confucius’ standard, to achieve sageness but still clinging to bibulousness, as it is depicted in the line “人之齊聖、飲酒溫克” (Men who are grave and wise, / Though they drink, are mild and masters of themselves.) (Legge 1994, 4:334; Liu 2003, 158) However, it is felt that the question of drinking is considered a minor motif within the context of the poem. Yu Zhihui reads 悉 as *xiu* 秀 which refers to the elegant literary effect of the poem having deployed faunal and floral metaphors (quoted in Zhu Yuanqing 2002, 404). It is felt that this is an unlikely interpretation as such a literary style applies to many other odes. Zhu Yuanqing reads 悉 as *ji* 悸 (fear) by identifying its configuration of 心 (忄) and 季, which are the modern graphic forms put together in . Zhu further asserts that 子 is often written as 人 in bronze inscriptions, thence 季 is in fact the word *ji* 季 (2002, 405-6). Zhu’s etymological explication appears to be well supported by textual evidence and that the poem as a whole does express a feeling of trepidation.

“Xiaobian” (小弁 Ode 197) and “Qiaoyan” (巧言 Ode 198)

Both Ma Chengyuan and Li Ling seem to suggest that the graph  can be read either as *chan* 讒 (slandorous) or *kuang* 誑 (fraudulent) (Ma 2001, 137; Li 2002, 36). Contending that the graph is made up of 言 and 𧈧 (pronounced as *chong* 蟲), not 𧈧 (pronounced as *kun* 昆), Wei Yihui 魏宜輝 concludes that this graph stands for *yong* 庸 (ordinary) by way of phonetic affinity with 𧈧. Thus 庸人, according to Wei, are people who do not speak righteous words (2002, 389). Hu Pingsheng observes that there is a duplication sign (short strokes on the lower right-hand side of the graph), which indicates that 𧈧 as it was written, is intended to be 蟲 but concludes that it should be read as 佞 by way of phonetic borrowing (2002, 282-2). Liu Xinfang cites other readings such as *liu* 流, *yu* 諛 (flattering), *wu* 誣 (false accusation), *xian* 閒 (idle) and declares the graph indeterminate (2003, 159). Any of these readings are possible as they signify different shades of being ‘treacherous’, a theme that is common to the poems “Xiaobian” and “Qiaoyan”. For the purpose of this translation the graph is read as 誑.

Shangbo Transcription:

伐木□□【8 part】實咎於其也■天保丌尋彖 蓐薑矣巽寡惠古也■諱父之賅亦又呂也■黃駟則困而谷反丌古也多恥者丌忍之 虐靖=者莪則呂人嗑也裳=者芋則…【9】

My Reading:

伐木□【弗】【8 part】實咎於己也。天保其得祿無疆矣，巽寡德，故也。祈父之責亦有以也。黃鳥則困而欲反其故也，多恥者其病之乎？菁菁者莪則以人益也。棠棠者華則…【9】



Translation:

“Famu” is [not] 【8 part】 really about being self-critical. “Tianbao” concerns the unlimited fortune bestowed upon [the king], because he possesses virtue. The accusations in “Qifu” are voiced with valid reasons. “Huangniao” describes the hardship [that one faces in an alien country], which arouses one’s desire for returning home; is it not a complaint from one who knows a sense of shame? “Jingjing zhi e” is about the benefits one can get [from befriending virtuous people]. “Changchang zhehua” ... 【9】

Annotation:

Most scholars consider that slip 9 should follow slip 8 (see Table 6), on which the poems cited are taken from the “Xiaoya”. The end of slip 8 is broken thus possibly one or two characters are missing.

“Famu” (伐木 Ode 165)

Ma Chengyuan reads  (transcribed as 寔) as *gui* 貴 (to regard as precious) and  as *qi* 其 (I, the perpendicular pronoun) (2001, 138). Hu Pingshen reads 貴咎 as *guijiu* 歸咎 (lay the blame) and notes that 其, which is usually written as 丌, should be read as *ji* 己 (self). Hu asserts that the poet is blaming himself for not being able to persuade his relatives and friends to come to the party (2002, 282). Ma proposes that the notion of self-criticism as expressed in “Famu” is considered precious by Confucius (2001, 138). He Linyi and Li Rui gloss 寔 as *shi* 實 (really)

having regard to its graphic form in other Chu texts (He 2002, 247; Li 2002, 400). Liao Mingchun suggests reconstructing the text by inserting *fu* 弗 (not) after 伐木 (where the slip has broken off) so that the sentence reads: “伐木[弗]實咎於己也” (2002, 262). By so doing Liao reverses the meaning of the (incomplete) sentence. Whether or not the poet was truly blaming himself the interpretation hinges on the verse “微我有咎” in the following stanza:

…既有肥牡	...along with my fatted meat
以速諸舅	To which to invite my maternal uncles.
寧適不來	It is better that something should keep them from coming,
微我有咎	Than that there should be blame attaching to me.

(Legge 1994, 4:254)

Huang Huaixin suggests that “微我有咎” has often been wrongly construed as the poet’s contrition whereas the correct interpretation should be that the poet is being blamed by others (2004, 180). Liu Xinfang reads 其 as 期 (social appointment) and suggests that 實咎於期 is the poet’s quibble about guests not turning up for the appointment (2003, 161). In fact, “微我有咎” is the poet’s rhetoric rather than true contrition, for he becomes rapturous, so it seems, enjoying his wine in the last stanza.⁹⁵ It is felt that Liao’s interpretation of Confucius’ comment finds linguistic congruity with the context of the poem – the poet is not really blaming himself.

“Tianbao” (天保 Ode 166)

Whilst the poem “Tianbao” is relatively straight forward, the commentary “饌寡德故也” is perplexing. Fang Yurun asserts that the poem is praising the king and wishing that he will be richly blessed by Heaven (1986, 338). The comment on “其得祿無疆矣” which can be translated as ‘he will receive felicity without end’, is well supported by the following verses:

…俾爾多益	... Grants thee [King] much increase,
以莫不庶	So that thou hast all in abundance.
…降爾遐福	... It sends down to thee long-during happiness,
維日不足	Which the days are not sufficient to enjoy.





(Legge 1994, 4:255-6)

⁹⁵ The last verse says: “迨我暇矣、飲此湑矣” (Whenever we have leisure, / Let us drink the sparkling spirits.) (Legge 1994, 4:255)

Having wished the king endless fortune the poet praises the virtue of the king for venerating his ancestors:

吉蠲為饎	With happy auspices and purifications, thou bringest the offerings,
是用孝享	And dost filially present
禴祠烝嘗	in spring, summer, autumn, and winter,
于公先王	to the dukes and former kings,
君曰卜爾	who say, 'We give to thee,
萬壽無疆	Myriad of years of duration unlimited.'

(Legge 1994, 4:257, modified)⁹⁶

Reading  (transcribed as 饎) as *zhuan* 饎 (food and wine) and *gua* 寡 (scanty) respectively, Ma Chengyuan observes that “饎寡德古” means that although the sacrificial food and wine are not offered in abundance, the act of adhering to the traditional ritual is regarded as virtuous (2001, 138). Yu Zhiwei quotes the concept of *xiaodian* 少典 (the lack of elaboration of *li*) from the *Guoyu* 國語 (*The Discourses of the States*) in support of Ma's reading (2002, 313). Liu Xinfang concurs with Ma, and suggests that sincerity of attitude is more important than the quality of the food and wine by quoting the lines “民之質矣、日用飲食”. The people are simple and honest, / Daily enjoying their meat and drink.) (Legge 1994, 4:257; Liu 2003, 162) This reading shifts the meaning of 寡 from being scanty to being ordinary. However, the verses quoted by Liu do not concern oblations and as can be seen from the above stanza beginning with “吉蠲為饎”, nothing is said about the quality or quantity of the food. Furthermore, whilst Heaven has granted the king material richness there is no reason to assume that the oblations should be meagre. Most other scholars read  as 故 (cause),  as *xun* 饎 and  as 寡 with different meanings. To Jiang Guanghui 饎寡德古也 is 遜寡德故也, in which *xun* 遜 means meek and 寡 is the king's reflexive pronoun (2002a). To Zhou Fengwu the sentence reads 贊寡德故也 in which *zan* 贊 means support (2002, 159). Li Ling and Liao Mingchun read 饎 as 選, which means 善 (good) (Li 2002, 36; Liao 2002, 263). Li Rui reads 饎 as 順 (go

⁹⁶ Legge's translation reads: “To the dukes and former kings, who [the present king] says, ‘We give to thee, Myriad of years of duration unlimited.’” As Fang Yurun points out, these verses are supposed to be spoken by the ancestral deities blessing the present king (1989, 340) and the translation has been modified accordingly.

along) (Li 2002, 400). Wang Zhiping points out that the *Shuowen jizi* glosses 異 as *ju* 具 (equipment, extended to mean to possess) (2002, 214). Huang Huaixin quotes the *Houhanshu* 後漢書 which states that: “寡者，人之上者也” (寡 means the one above all people) (2004, 184). In this sense 寡 is equivalent to the ‘royal pronoun’ in English, the difference is that in English it is the royal ‘we’ whereas in Chinese it is the singular ‘I’, but the latter in Chinese can be a vocative or accusative case as well as a possessive pronoun. Within its context the term 寡德 refers to the king’s virtue.

To sum up, this sentence can be read as 饌寡，德古也, which means that oblations of food and wine are scanty or ordinary, and as such, it is conventional virtue. Alternatively, it can be read as 異寡德，故也, which means that Heaven bestows fortune upon the king because (1) he has the virtue of meekness, or (2) the king’s virtue is supported (贊) by his counsels, or simply (3), he has (in the sense of ‘to possess’, 具) kingly virtue. The last interpretation is considered to be the most straightforward and appropriate and is adopted for translation.

“Qifu” (祈父 Ode 185)

As far as “Qifu” is concerned, the key word 賁 has been glossed by Ma Chengyuan as *ze* 責 (to accuse) (2001, 138). Li Ling agrees with Ma but prefers to read it as *ci* 刺 (satirize) in view of the context of the poem (2002, 37). Exegetical opinions oscillate between 責 and 刺 (Wang Zhiping 2002, 214; Huang Huaixin 2004, 184; Chi and Zheng 2004, 29; Liu Xinfang 2003, 165-6). This graph can be compared to that in the Baoshen Chu bamboo text 包山楚簡 which has been clearly identified as 責 (He 1998, 769). The difference between 刺 and 責 is subtle yet clear: the former is dismissiveness connoting ridicule and mockery; the latter is an accusation. Fang Yurun points out that the poet of “Qifu”, a palace guard who was not supposed to take part in military expeditions outside the palace, was complaining against the minister of war for deploying him in battle fields on prolonged combat duties (1986, 337). Without mincing his words the poet accuses the minister Qifu explicitly, as the following stanza shows:

祈父
亶不聰
胡轉予于恤

Minister of war,
You have indeed acted without discrimination
Why have you rolled us into this sorrow,

有母之尸饗 So that our mothers have to do all the labour of
cooking?
(Legge 1994, 4:299)

That “[the] mothers have to do all the labour of cooking” is a metaphor that depicts the guards, having been sent off to battles, are precluded from fulfilling their filial duties at home. This is what “Kongzi shilun” considers to be the real cause of the accusation. Thus “祈父之責亦有以也” can be translated as: ‘The accusation expressed in “Qifu” has [solid] grounds’.


“Huangniao” (黃鳥 Ode 187)

There are two poems entitled “Huangniao”; one is placed within the “Feng” and the other in the “Xiaoya”. Ma Chengyuan asserts that the “Huangniao” here refers to the *xiaoya* poem (Ode 187), which describes the distress of strangers living in an alien place (2001, 138). The distress – *kun* 困 – here refers to the sentiments expressed in these verses:

黃鳥黃鳥	Yellow bird, yellow bird,
無集于穀	Do not settle on the broussonetias,
此邦之人	The people of this country,
不我肯穀	Are not willing to treat me well.
言旋言歸	I will return, I will go back,
復我邦族	Back to my country and kin.


(Legge 1994, 4:301-2)

The poet’s wish to return to his native land and people (欲反其故) is clearly voiced in the verses “言旋言歸、復我邦族” (I will return, I will go back, / Back to my country and kin.) (Legge 1994, 4:301) Ma’s exposition is supported by the majority of scholars (Huang Huaixin 2004, 190; Chi and Zheng 2004, 29; Zhou Fengwu 2002, 159).

Apart from transcribing the pictograph  as 恚, Ma Chengyuan has not identified its possible reading (2001, 138). Zhou Fengwu identifies it as *fang* 方 which stands for either *bang* 謗 (evil) or *fang* 妨 (harm) (2002, 159). Others read it as *bing* 病 (detest) (Wang Zhiping 2002, 215; Huang Huaixin 2004, 186; Li Ling 2002, 37; Li Rui 2002, 193). Pang Pu considers it to be an inscription error of *fen* 忿 (angry) (2002, 237). Fan Yuzhou glosses it as *fang* 防 (to guard against) (2002, 175).

Liu Xinfang identifies the graph either as *you* 憂 or *bing* 病 (both mean worry) or 病 (2003, 167). Other scholars believe that the commentary refers to “Huangniao” of the “Feng” (Ode 131). This macabre poem was composed to lament the deaths of the three virtuous ministers of Duke Mu of Qin 秦穆公 (? – 621 BCE) – Yanxi 奄息, Zhonghang 仲行, and Zhenhu 鍼虎 – who were sacrificially buried with the Duke on his death. Li Ling proposes an alternative reading: 黃鳥則困天欲，恥 (sic, the original graph is clearly 反) 其故也，多恥者其病之乎 (2002, 37). Liu Xinfang’s reading is slightly different: 黃鳥則困，天欲反其古也，多恥者其病之乎. Liu explains that *kun* 困 (distress) here refers to the gruesome experience of the three ministers facing the prospect of being buried alive, as it is depicted in the verses “臨其穴、惴惴其慄” (When he came to the grave, / He looked terrified and trembled.) (Legge 1994, 4:198) The bamboo text “天欲反其古” means Heaven wished to revert to the kingly way of old; “多恥者其病之乎” means that the common people, overwhelmed by immense disgust, lamented the tragic loss of life (2003, 168). It appears that whilst “Huangniao” describes the distress of death prospect, the poem has not mentioned Heaven’s will to revert to the kingly way of old. It could be argued that reference to Heaven in the line “彼蒼者天” (Thou azure Heaven there!) (Legge 1994, 4:199) serves as a rhetorical question rather than a wish to revert to the way of the ancient kings. On balance it appears that the bamboo commentary is addressing Ode 187 and not Ode 131.

“Jingjing zhi e” (菁菁者莪 Ode 176)

There is general consensus on the transcription of the graph  as *yi* 益 (benefit) (Ma 2001, 138) but opinions on the interpretation of “菁菁者莪則以人益也” differ. Bing Shangbai 邴尚白 follow the “Little preface” in that this poem is about the *junzi* 君子 (noble lord) instructing the talented. However, as Huang Huaixin points out, the poem expresses the joy of receiving pecuniary benefits from the *junzi*, as the following stanzas show (2004, 190-1):

菁菁者莪	Luxuriantly grows the aster-southernwood,
在彼中阿	In the midst of that large mound.
既見君子	Since we see our noble lord,
樂且有儀	We rejoice, and he shows us all courtesy...

菁菁者莪 Luxuriantly grows the aster-southernwood,
 在彼中陵 In the midst of that great height.
 既見君子 We see our noble lord,
 錫我百朋 And he gives us a hundred sets of cowries.

(Legge 1994, 4:279-80)

Chao Fulin follows Zhu Xi's interpretation which considers the largesse as a metaphor for the elation of meeting the virtuous *junzi*; as praise for the attentive practice of rituals (2002b, 94-6). The adopted interpretation of “以人益” is that one can benefit from making friends with the virtuous *junzi*.

3. The *Feng* 風 Poems

Shangbo Transcription:

關雎之改■榑木之皆■灘圭之智■鵲巢之歸■甘棠之保■綠衣之思鷦=之
 情■害曰童而皆取於丌初者也■關雎呂色俞於豐…【10】兩矣■丌四
 章則俞矣■呂璽茹之攸恣好色之忒呂鐘鼓之樂…【14】…好反內於豐
 不亦能改虐■榑木福斯才羣=不…【12】…可尋不丌不可能不亦
 暫互虐■鵲巢出呂百兩不亦又璽虐■甘【13】…及丌人敬鷦丌壺其保厚
 矣■甘棠之鷦呂邵公…【15】青鷦也■關雎之改則丌思鷦矣■榑木之皆
 則呂其彖也■灘圭之智則智不可尋也鵲巢之歸則璽者【11】…邵公也■
 綠衣之思思古人也■鷦=之情呂丌蜀也■【16 part】

My Reading:

關雎之改，榑木之承，漢廣之智，鵲巢之歸，甘棠之報，綠衣之思，燕燕之
 情，曷？曰：重而皆賢於其初者也。關雎以色喻於禮【10】…兩矣，其四章則
 喻矣。以琴瑟之悅擬好色之願，以鐘鼓之樂…【14】…好，反納於禮，不亦
 能改乎？榑木福斯在君子…不亦^有承^乎？【12】…^漢^廣不^求不^可得，不攻
 不可能，不亦知恆乎？鵲巢出以百輛，不亦有蕩乎？甘【13】^棠^思及其人，
 敬愛其樹，其報厚矣！甘棠之愛以邵公【15】^也…情愛也。關雎之改，則其思

益矣！樛木之承，則以其祿也。漢廣之智，則知不可得也，鵲巢之歸則蕩者
 【11】…邵公也，綠衣之憂，思故人也，燕燕之情以其獨也。【16 part】

Translation:

The transformation depicted in “**Guanju**”, the blessedness mentioned in “**Jiumu**”, the wisdom expressed in “**Hanguang**”, the wedding in “**Quechao**”, the requital in “**Gantang**”, the sorrow in “**Lüyi**”, the passion in “**Yanyan**” – what can be said about these sentiments? [I] say, [What these poems] bring to bear are the morals that are to be cherished. The sensual feelings in “**Guanju**” are contained within propriety
 【10】... twice ... the forth stanza explicates this. With zithers and lyres sensual appetites are versed in cultural delights. With bells and drums 【14】 is the reversal [from sensuality] to rituality not transformation? “**Jiumu**” is about the bestowal of fortune upon the *junzi*; [is this not divine favour?] ... 【12】
 [“**Hanguang**” advocates] abstaining from the quest for the unreachable and the impossible; is it not about knowing the immutable truth? “**Quechao**” depicts [a wedding procession] of carriages in hundreds; is this not generosity? The affection in “**Gantang**” 【13】 concerns [the memory] of a person and associating that fondness with his tree; such requital of affection is profound indeed. The affection that “**Gantang**” speaks of is devoted to Shao Gong 【15】 ... affection...The transformation presented in “**Guanju**” indicates that its thoughts are edifying. The blessing that “**Jiumu**” depicts is [the *junzi*’s] fortune. The wisdom of “**Hanguang**” is about knowing what cannot be attained. The wedding described in “**Quechao**” is about generosity. 【11】 ... Shao Gong. The grief in “**Lüyi**” is caused by remembrance of one’s dearly departed. The emotion portrayed in “**Yanyan**” shows how devout love can be. 【16 part】

Annotation:

Scholars are in general agreement to the titles of the *feng* poems as identified by Ma Chengyuan (2001, 139). Many of these poems are explained by Confucius in terms of *qing*: sexual desires, the requital of affection, the love of a lost one, and the emotion of parting which are discernible when Confucius’ comments are read in conjunction with the poems.

“Guanju” (關雎 Ode 1)


In this passage the commentary on “Guanju” reads:




關雎之改…

關雎以色喻於禮…兩矣，其四章則喻矣。以琴瑟之悅擬好色之願，以鐘鼓之樂…好，反納於禮，不亦能改乎？


關雎之改，則其思益矣！

The comment “重而皆賢於其初者也” is a common reflection on all the poems reviewed in this passage. This will be dealt with after the specific comments on each of the poems have been studied.

As the key word encapsulating the essence of “Guanju” the graph  has been transcribed as 改, on whose meaning scholarly opinions are divided. The *Shuowen jiezi* glosses 改 as an amulet. Ma Chengyuan reads it as 怡 (harmony) and maintains that it is not the same word as *gai* 改 (transformation) (2001, 139). Wang Zhiping reads it as *qiu* 逌 (match) (2002, 215). Other readings include: *jin* 鬯 (a nuptial wine cup) (Jao 2002, 229); *fei* 妃 (a consort) (Zhou Fengwu 2002, 182), *shi* 嬰 (happiness); *ai* 哀 (grief), *si* 巳, and *zhi* 止 (prohibition) (Huang Huaixin 2004, 24). Reading 改 as 怡、逌、鬯 or 嬰 befits “Guanju” as a love song, as these words connote nuptial happiness and harmony. Jiang Guanghui contends that 改 is the ancient form of 改 (2002a). Chi and Zheng confirm that 改 has been written as 改 in Warring States scriptures and on oracle bones (2004, 33; also Li Xueqin 2005, 16-20). It appears that the evidence to read the graph as 改 is convincing and that “關雎之改” is foregrounding the transformative effects of the poem. This reading is supported by the sentence “反納於禮” (reversion to propriety).

The graph  (俞) appears twice within the above passage, the first has been glossed by Ma Chengyuan as *yu* 喻 (to verse) in “關雎以色喻於禮” (In “Guanju” prurience is versed in propriety). Ma reads the second as *yu* 愉 (pleased) in “其四章則愉矣” (The fourth stanza is [about] happiness). Ma also identifies  (喜) as *xi* 嬉 (to entertain) and  (忼) as *wan* 忼 (or 玩, covetousness) (2001, 140, 143-4); thence “以琴瑟之悅，嬉好色之忼” can be rendered as: ‘with the joy of the zithers and lyres is covetousness for sensuality entertained’. Most other commentators read

俞 as 喻 in both cases, and 參 as *ni* 擬 (allude to) and 忝 as *yuan* 願 (desire) (Zhou Fengwu 2002, 161; Huang Huaixin, 2004, 26; Chi and Zheng 2004, 39-41). Li Ling’s version is “其四章則逾矣” where *yu* 逾 means ‘exceedingly’ (The fourth stanza is exceedingly ...) (2002, 27), which is a rather obscure interpretation. The received text of “Guanju” is traditionally divided into five stanzas (Wang Xianqian 1987, 1:16); Legge’s translation has combined them into three. Stanzaic divisions of the poem during Confucius’ time may be different to the received text but it could be assumed that the fourth stanza means the one with the lines “窈窕淑女、琴瑟友之” (The modest, retiring, virtuous, young lady: / With lutes, small and large, let us give her friendly welcome.) (Legge 1994, 4:4) From these verses the shift from the appetite of the flesh to the abidance by propriety can be clearly discerned.

According to Ma Chengyuan the graph  (贍) is the ancient form of *yi* 益 (2001, 141), however 益 can mean ‘to intensify’ or ‘edifying’. Thus “其思益矣” refers to the tossing and turning of the suitor as his craving (*si*, 思) for the fair lady intensifies. This interpretation is admissible as part of courtship experience if 關雎之改 is read as 關雎之怡 (nuptial pleasure). However, if 改 is glossed as 改 (transformation), then the suitor’s desires would have been moderated rather than intensified. Chi and Zheng assert that 益 means edification through sublimation (2004, 43). Huang Huaixin clarifies that “其思益矣” refers to the poet’s high-minded purpose, as “Guanju” teaches the transformation of carnality into propriety rather than the intensification of craving (2004, 27). However, in the absence of any clear indication of the narrative position, the distinction between the implied author (poet) and the persona in the poem is ambiguous and 思 can be attributed to either.


“Jiumu” (樛木 Ode 4)

In the quoted passage “Jiumu” is appraised as follows:

樛木之承...

樛木福斯在君子，不亦_亦有_有承_承乎_乎？

樛木之承，則以其祿也。

“Jiumu” is regarded as a poem that praises the *junzi* upon whom Heaven has bestowed fortune. Ma Chengyuan explains that although the graph  (𣎵) is

normally glossed as *shi* 時, in “樛木之時” it should be read as *chi* 持 (to hold) (2001, 140). Most other scholars maintain that the graph should be read as 時, and gloss it to mean *shihui* 時會 (felicities) (Huang Huaixin 2004, 33) or *shiyun* 時運 (timely fortune, luck) (Li Ling 2002, 27). Chi and Zheng assert that 時 stands for *shan* 善 (benevolence) with scholia support⁹⁷ (2004, 34). However, in glossing “帝命不時” of 文王 (Ode 235) Ma Ruichen points out that 時 should be read as *cheng* 承 (to receive) as the two words are interchangeable in ancient texts.⁹⁸ Ma further avers that 承 also means *mei* 美 (perfect or be made perfect) (Ma 1989, 793). It follows that “樛木之時” should be read as 樛木之承. Here 承 assumes the meaning of ‘blessedness’ or ‘divine favour’ all subsuming the sense of ‘being made perfect’. Wang Zhiping reads *si* 斯 of “福斯在君子” as *chi* 褫 which means *fu* 福 (prosperity) (2002, 217), thus the sentence becomes 福‘福’在君子 which is syntactically and semantically problematic.

The opening couplet of “Jiumu” reads: “南有樛木、葛藟纍之” (In the south are the trees with curved drooping branches, / With the dolichoes creepers clinging to them.) (Legge 1994, 4:10) Subsequent verses of each stanza are similarly constructed. The metaphor of the downward extending boughs to which creepers cling has been taken as women’s dependence on the *junzi* (Wang Xianqian 1987, 32); thence Legge’s translation of the ensuring lines “樂只君子、福履綏之” is: “To be rejoiced in is our princely lady: / May she repose in her happiness and dignity.” (Legge 1994, 4:10) “Kongzi shilun” espouses an alternative interpretation: the metaphor speaks of Heaven’s boon from above (metaphorically expressed as the drooping boughs) to the *junzi*. This theme is underlined by the comment “樛木之承，則以其祿也” – the blessing depicted in “Jiumu” is the prosperity, and by which the *junzi*’s felicity is made perfect. As can be extrapolated from Confucius’ comment on King Wen’s receipt of the mandate from heaven (Slip 7), the concept of *tianming* 天命 during pre-Qin times was more philosophical and sophisticated than pure 時運 or

⁹⁷ In glossing the verse “爾穀既時” of Ode 217 “Kiu Bian” 頍弁, the *Mao Shijuan* glosses 時 as “good” (毛詩傳: “時，善也。”)

⁹⁸ Ma Ruichen quotes 大戴·小閒篇: “時天之氣” to be read as “承天之氣” and 楚策: “抑承甘露之氣” which is written as “抑時甘露之氣” in 新序·雜事篇 as evidence of the interchangeability of 時 and 承. Chen Zhi observes that Wang Yinshi 王引之 (1766-1834) was the first exegete to gloss 時 as 承 (2013, 422-44).

luck. Chao Fulin glosses 福履 as *fali* 伐歷 (resumé) and claims that fortune is bestowed upon the *junzi* because of his meritorious service rendered (2002a, 3). However, by reason of intertextuality between the commentary and the poem the word 福 in Confucius’ comment “福斯在君子” and in the verse “福履綏之” should assume the same meaning, in which case Chao’s reading of the poem is not congruent with Confucius’ comment.




“Hanguang” (漢廣 Ode 9)

The commentary on “Hanguang” focuses on *zhi* 智 (wisdom):

漢廣之智…

漢廣不求不可得，不攻不可能，不亦知恆乎？

漢廣之智，則知不可得也…

It has been recognized that the graph  stands both for 智 and 知 (be aware) within the Chu vocabulary. Ma Chengyuan declares the graph  (攻) unknown (2001, 143); other exegetes have identified it as *gong* 攻 (to do, to tackle) (Huang Huaixin, 2004, 34; Liu Xinfang 2003, 187). Li Ling glosses it as *qiong* 窮 (to pursue something to the end) (2002, 27). Zhou Fengwu reads it as *ji* 極 (superlative) (2002, 160-1). Ma Chengyuan identifies  (互) as *heng* 恆 (permanent), to which Huang Huaixin agrees (Huang 2004, 36). The first stanza of “Hanguang” expresses the poet’s admiration of the girls rambling along the River Han but knows that they are beyond reach as the river is too wide and cannot be crossed by any means:

南有喬木	In the south rise the trees without branches,
不可休息	Affording no shelter.
漢有游女	By the Han are girls rambling about,
不可求思	But it is vain to solicit them.
漢之廣矣	The breadth of the Han
不可泳思	Cannot be dived across;
江之永矣	The length of the river
不可方思	Cannot be navigated with a raft.
翹翹錯薪	Many are the bundles of firewood;
言刈其楚	I would cut down the brambles.
之子于歸	Those girls that are going to their future home,
言秣其馬 …	I would feed their horses.
言刈其蒺 …	I would cut down the wormweed.

言秣其駒 … I would feed their colts.

(Legge 1994, 4:16; modified)


Li Shan 李山 subscribes to the view held by the *guwen* exegetes (古文家) that “Hanguang” is a poem cautioning the young men of Zhou not to woo the rambling girls of the south (2004, 49). In a swarm of conflicting thoughts mingling the sensual with the rational, the poet’s ungratified desire reverberates in the remaining two stanzas, forming the main theme of the poem. It can be seen that the poet knows that the Han girls are beyond reach and this knowledge is regarded as the wisdom advocated by “Hanguang” (漢廣之智) – not to pursue an impossible target (不求不可得，不攻不可能) is regarded as the incontrovertible and immutable way (恆) (Huang Huaixin 2004, 34). The cutting of firewood and brambles and the feeding of the horses described in the second and third stanzas are part of the wedding tradition in ancient times (Wen Yiduo 2004, 310).⁹⁹ This implies that rationality prevails over sensuality as the poet sets his eyes on the practicality of marriage, which is to be achieved within the institution of propriety rules. Such realization reinforces Confucius’ comment that it is wisdom.

“Quechao” (鵲巢 Ode 12)

The poem “Quechao”, which depicts a wedding procession, has attracted these comments in the manuscript:

鵲巢之歸 …
 鵲巢出以百輛不亦有蕩乎？
 鵲巢之歸則蕩者




The graph  (歸) has been identified as *gui* 歸 (betrothal) (Ma 2001, 141) on which there is general consensus among commentators. The poem comprises three similarly constructed stanzas; each of which opens with the metaphor of the magpie and the dove and is followed by the scene of a wedding procession. By the pomposity displayed (carriages in hundreds) it is understood that the occasion involves two noble households. The first stanza reads:

維鵲有巢 The nest is the magpie’s;

⁹⁹ Also see Wei Yuan 魏源 The *Shiguwei* 詩古微 cited in Nie Shiqiao 2007, 23.

維鳩居之 The dove dwells in it.
 之子于歸 This young lady is going to her future home;
 百兩御之 A hundred carriages are meeting her.

(Legge 1994, 4:12)

Ma Chengyuan transcribes the graph  as 逵 (pronounced as *ti* 嚏) without identifying its modern equivalent but postulates that it may mean *pipei* 匹配 (espousal) (2001, 141). Zhou Fengwu agrees with Ma as far as its meaning is concerned but identifies the word as *li* 儷 (a married couple) (2002, 160). Yu Zhihui's reading is *yuan* 遠 (distant) (2002, 313); Jiang Guanghui glosses it as *yu* 御 (welcome) (2002a). Wang Zhiping reads it as *hui* 惠 (love) (2002, 216). Hu Pingshen identifies it as *li* 離 (depart) (2002, 283); so does Huang Huaixin. This graph appears again on slip 27 and reading it as 離, as Huang puts it, makes sense in both cases. Huang argues that “Quechao” propounds the idea that because the wedding procession is a hundred carriages strong, the bride is leaving her parents for a new home far away (Huang 2004, 37). In so doing Huang is shifting the meaning of 離 to 遠 as proposed by Yu. This reading does not appear to be logical as the size of the wedding procession is unrelated to the distance of the bride's travel. These interpretations only reveal the superficial meaning of the poem and might have missed its referential import. Likewise reading 逵 as 儷 or 御 does not seem to advance one's understanding of the poem much further. Transcribing the graph 逵 as 逵, He Linyi recognizes the possibility of its multiple reading as *chang* 暢 standing for 暢 (joyful), and *dang* 蕩,¹⁰⁰ denoting *kuanda* 寬大 (generous) (2002, 248). This reading is a fitting description of the wedding procession which comprises hundreds of carriages, and is a generous gesture of escorting and welcoming the bride to her new abode.

Over the years the interpretation of the magpie-and-dove metaphor has been fraught with controversy. In its typical platitudinous interpretation the “Little preface” glosses this poem as a paean to a virtuous lady who is analogous to the dove

¹⁰⁰ He Linyi quotes “The 29th year of Duke of Xiang” of the *Zuozhuan* (左傳襄公二十九年), in which “美哉蕩乎” (Beautiful [and] grand) is Prince Wu's comment on the music of Bin (邠) (He 2002, 248). He may be economical with his exposition of the phonetic loan movement of the graph from 逵 to 蕩. Perhaps 蕩 is a loan word from *shang* 湯 as in “淇水湯湯” (Full is the River Qi) of Ode 58. From 湯 it can be traced to *chang* 暢/ 鬯 and then 逵.

(Legged 1994, 4:39); how that commendation is arrived at remains unexplained. Zhu Xi claims that the magpie is adept in building nests while the dove is inept at it. The dove occupying the magpie's nest is taken as a parallel to a woman taking up residence at her husband's home (1777, 1:10). Yao Jiheng criticizes past exegeses but fails to advance any new interpretations (1838, 3:3). Fang Yurun asserts that whilst the magpie is adept in nest building, the dove is maternally skilful in rearing chicks. Fang's exposition has dispelled the derogatory connotations of the metaphor as he further posits that this poem is a wedding song for temple rituals (1986, 94). It seems that traditionally commentators have focused on the magpie-and-dove metaphor but little has been said about the carriages of the wedding procession, which are considered by Confucius to be significant.

Juxtaposing the metaphor of nesting (巢) with wedding (歸), the poem foregrounds the particular trait of generosity common to the avian and human worlds. Nuptial union is built upon the generosity of sharing, rather than the selfishness of taking without contributing, be it happiness, commitment or material resources of the partners. Such generosity manifests in the giving away of the bride with an escort of a hundred carriages (百兩將之), and reciprocated by equal numbers of the welcoming party (百兩御之). Adopted in this translation is what Confucius considers to be generous: the number of carriages in the wedding processions (出以百輛，不亦有蕩乎).

“Gantang” (甘棠 Ode 16)

On the poem “Gantang”, Confucius has this to say:

甘棠之報 …
 甘棠…思及其人，敬愛其樹，其報厚矣！
 甘棠之愛以邵公也


The three stanzas of the poem that concerns 召伯 Shao Bo (referred to as 邵公 Shao Gong in the manuscript) and a pear tree are similarly constructed with minor variations. The first stanza reads:

蔽芾甘棠 [This] umbrageous¹⁰¹ sweet pear-tree; -

¹⁰¹ Legge's translation of 蔽芾 as “umbrageous” (shade providing) has avoided the question whether the pear tree is a big tree or a small tree, a much debated on the real meaning of the graphs as separate

勿翦勿伐 Clip it not, hew it not down.
召伯所茇 Under it the chief of Shao lodged (or rested).

Opinions are divided on the identity of Shao Gong. One school of thought considers the protagonist of “Gantang” to be Duke Shao (召公 or 邵公), whose name was Ji Shi 姬奭 (circa 1100 BCE), who was a descendant of the royal house of Zhou. Both Duke Dan 周公旦 and Duke Shao were regents during the reign of King Wu. Ji Shi was enfeoffed at Shao and was thus entitled Duke Shao (Sima n.d., 7). Sima Qian records in the *Shiji* that Duke Shao was so loved and respected by his people for his benevolent governance that they composed the poem “Gantang” in remembrance of him; the pear tree in his fiefdom under which he used to take shelter was iconized in the poem (Sima n.d., 81). Another school of thought considers that the Shao Gong of this poem refers to a minister of King Xuan of Zhou 周宣王, Shaomu Gong Fu 召穆公虎 (circa 840 BCE) (Nie 2007, 37). Despite the discrepancy, “Kongzi shilun” has not provided any clue for resolving this problem; suffice it to say that Shao Gong was a good governor to his people. The three short stanzas appeal to the people of Shao to protect the pear tree from hewing and trimming.

The graph  appears twice in the passage and its transcription as *bao* 保 (protection) is beyond doubt. The only contention seems to be the possibility of phonetic loan within the contexts of their appearance. Ma Chengyuan considers the poem as a panegyric on Shao Gong thus 保 should be read as *bao* 褒 (praise) on both occasions (2001, 140, 144). Others read it as *bao* 報 (requital) (Liao Mingchun 2002, 263; Chi and Zheng 2004, 36; Liu Xinfang 2003, 192; Huang Huaixin 2004, 43). Jao Tsung-I 饒宗頤 affirms that no phonetic loan is necessary and prefers to read the graph as-is (2002, 230). It is not hard to appreciate the emotions expressed in the poem: in requiting the kindness of Shao Gong and through sublimation, the people revered the pear tree in whose shade he had rested (worked?), warning any wilful damage to it. Thus 報 appears to be the correct reading and “其報厚矣，甘棠之愛

characters and as a binome, which have been glossed as either big or small by scholars over the years. This has led to the question of the time of composition of the poem, where exactly 召南 was and the identity of 邵公 or 召伯. Also questioned is the meaning of 茇 which has been glossed to mean building a cottage for logging or simply rested 止. These points have been covered in detail by Chi Hsiu-sheng but the findings do not seem to be conclusive. See Chi 2010, 174-211.

以邵公也” refers to the deep feeling of the requited affection. The complexity of this poem warrants further discussion (see Chapter 4).

“Lüyi” (綠衣 Ode 27)

The comments on “Lüyi” are relatively simple:

綠衣之思 …
綠衣之憂，思古人也


The theme of “Lüyi” is clearly about remembrance and sorrow, as can be read from these verses: “心之憂矣…我思古人…” (The sorrow of my heart...I think of the ancients.) (Legge 1994, 4:41-2) There is general consensus on the transcription of the Chu graphs of *si* 思 (remembrance) and *you* 憂 (sorrow), on which the commentary has focused. However, Liao Mingchun considers *guren* 古人 both in the commentary and the poem to be referring to 故人 (a deceased person) (2002b, 72). Huang Huaixin further affirms that 故人 is the poet’s dearly departed wife (2004, 45). Others maintain that 古人 refers to the virtuous ancients as prompted by the couplet “我思古人、俾無訖兮” ([But] I think of the ancients, / That I may be kept from doing wrong) which is no doubt a normative interpretation. However, it is noted that *chixi* 絺綌 is mentioned in the last stanza (絺兮綌兮、淒其以風; Linen, fine or coarse, / Is cold when worn in the wind) (Legge 1994, 4:42) which, as will be discussed in the annotation to the poem “Getan” later, denotes kinship. It is well justified to interpret 古人 as 故人 (one’s dearly departed), particularly in view of the depth of emotion as expressed in the poem.

“Lüyi” is an obscure poem whose metaphor of the upper and lower garments and the colour codes have inspired vastly diverging interpretations. In the couplets “綠兮衣兮、綠兮黃裳” (Green is the upper robe, / Green the upper, and yellow the lower garment) where green is considered to be the informal colour and yellow the formal one, the symbolic subordination of the green by the yellow has been taken to mean the wife or queen being dominated by the concubine(s) (Fang Yurun 1986, 123-4). Unfortunately the “Kongzi shilun” commentary has not shed any new light on the interpretation of this poem as far as such reading is concerned.

“Yanyan” (燕燕 Ode 28)

The following comment on “Yanyan” is relatively straightforward but its simplicity belies its ambiguity:

燕燕之情 ...
燕燕之情以其獨也。

Ma Chengyuan identifies the graph  as *shu* 蜀, but reads it as *du* 篤 (devoutness), which means the profundity of love (情之厚) (2001, 145). Li Ling reads it as *gua* 寡 (widow)¹⁰² having regard to the verses “先君之思、以勸寡人” of the poem (In thinking of our deceased lord, / She stimulated me.) (Legge 1994, 4:42; modified; Li 2002, 27) Huang Huaixin reads the graph as 獨, glossing it to mean solitude (2004, 48), pointing to the fact that the poet will be facing loneliness after the farewell. Zhou Fengwu, Jao Tsung-I and Chao Fulin cite the adage “君子慎獨” (the *junzi* remains focused) from the bamboo text “Wuxing” 五行 in which “Yanyan” has been quoted (Zhou 2002, 161; Jao 2002, 230; Chao 2004, 126). Liang Tao 梁濤 reads 獨 not in the sense of physical isolation or solitude, but a state of mind that transcends materialism, which can be extended to mean sincerity (2005). Xunzi asserts in the chapter entitled “Nothing Indecorous” 不苟 that “不誠則不獨” (without sincerity 誠, there is no focus 獨 – my translation), which essentially illustrates the synonymy of 誠 and 獨. In conclusion the graph can be read as 獨 (single-mindedness, sincerity), in which case it subsumes the meaning of steadfastness, resoluteness, dedication and devoutness as attributes of love, but the meaning of loneliness should not be disregarded.

“Yanyan”, as transmitted, comprises four stanzas. The first three are similar in structure but the fourth stanza seems to be out of line with the rest. The first and fourth stanzas are included below:

燕燕于飛	The swallows go flying about,
差池其羽	With their wings unevenly displayed.
之子于歸	The lady was returning [to her native state],
遠送于野	And I escorted her far into the country.
瞻望弗及	I looked till I could no longer see her,
泣涕如雨	And my tears fell down like rain.

¹⁰² See the meaning of the word 寡 in previous discussions on 天保.

仲氏任只	Lovingly confiding was lady Zhong;
其心塞淵	Truly deep was her feeling.
終溫且惠	Both gentle was she and docile,
淑慎其身	Virtuously careful of her person.
先君之思	In thinking of our deceased lord,
以勸寡人	She stimulated worthless me.

(Legge 1994, 4:42-4; modified)

“Yanyan” depicts the profound emotions of bidding one’s beloved farewell but the cameo can be interpreted differently. Legge’s translation follows the interpretation of the “Little preface”, which identifies the personae in the poem as Zhuang Jiang 莊姜, the widow of Duke Zhuang of Wei 衛莊公 (circa 700 BCE) escorting 仲氏 (Lady Zhong), a concubine of the duke, returning to her native state (Legge 1994, 4:41). This historical reference is found in “The Third and Fourth Years of Duke Yin” in the *Zuozhuan* 左傳隱公三、四年: Zhuang Jiang bore no son for Duke Zhuang, and had adopted concubine Daigui’s 戴嬀 son Wan 完 her own (Daigui is referred to as Lady Zhong in the poem). Wan succeeded to the dukedom as Duke Huan 衛桓公 but was later assassinated by Zhouyu 州吁, a by-blow of Duke Zhuang.¹⁰³ The poem depicts Daigui returning to her native state after the tragic event, escorted by Zhuang Jiang. However, Daigui’s return home is not recorded in the *Zuozhuan*. Chen Zhi (1999b, 8) points out that Wang Zhi 王質 (1135-1189) has already argued that according to the *Shiji* Daigui died before Wan became the heir apparent therefore it was impossible for Zhuang Jiang to bid her farewell after Wan’s murder. Chen affirms that “Yanyan” was written by Wugeng 武庚 who was the son of the last Shang king Zhou 紂 (1999b, 20). Chen’s reading is more credible than the Maoshi interpretation in light of the textual and circumstantial evidence produced. This will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4.

Another historical reading is proposed by Liu Xiang 劉向 (77-6 BCE) of the Former Han. He relates this poem to Ding Jiang 定姜, who was the wife of Duke Ding of Wei 衛定公 (circa 570 BCE) seeing her widowed daughter-in-law returning home (1998, 5).

Li Chendong proposes yet another historical reading as he claims that the Lady Zhong mentioned in the poem was the wife of Yin Jifu and this poem is about

¹⁰³ The *Zuozhuan* describes Zhouyu as “嬀人之子也” (the son of a favoured woman), see “The Third Year of Duke Yin” of the *Zuozhuan*.

Yin seeing her off on her journey back to her native country, as their marriage had broken up (1961, 201-2). However on close examination Li’s arguments lack substantive support.¹⁰⁴ In essence the historical event, if there were one that this poem is supposed to depict, is confusing. In fact these are but two of the many readings which will be examined further in Chapter 5.

Exegetes who subscribe to the reading of the “Little preface” attribute authorship of this poem to Zhuang Jiang (reflexively addressed as 寡人 ‘I’ in the poem). Huang Huaixin argues that it is unlikely for Zhuang Jiang to be the author of “Yanyan”, for *gui* 歸 normally means a woman’s marriage rather than returning home. Furthermore, it is not the correct protocol for Zhuang Jiang to address herself as 寡人, a prerogative term reserved for man as a head of state (2004, 49).¹⁰⁵ Li Shuling argues otherwise, claiming that 寡人 is what Zhuang Jiang identifies herself as the widow and that 任 in 仲氏任只 should be read as *ren* 妊 (pregnancy), referring to the ladies’ memories of Daigui bearing a son of their deceased lord (2009a, 14-5). This reading seems to be rather far-fetched.



The first three stanzas of “Yanyan” open with the metaphor of a pair of swallows flying together but the inclusion of the fourth stanza, to which the historical interpretation of the “Little preface” is based, is entirely out of character with the first three. Chao Fulin posits that the fourth stanza of “Yanyan” and the seventh stanza of Ode 199 “He rensi” 何人斯 had been transmission errors; these two stanzas should be removed from where they are in the received texts and be regrouped as a separate poem, which could be a lost poem purportedly entitled “Zhongshi” 仲氏 (see slip 27) (2003b, 18).¹⁰⁶ However, this poem, with or without the fourth stanza, expresses deep and devout love, thus Confucius’ comment is translated accordingly.

¹⁰⁴ Li’s claim is predicated on three arguments: Yin Jifu was a native of Hebei and Zhongshi’s home was in Henan. The verse 遠送于南 fits the journey going south. However, as Wen Yiduo points out 南 is read as 林 and not ‘south’ (Wen 1948, 2:166). Secondly, Li argues that the verses “終溫且惠、淑慎其身” were addressing Zhongshi as Yin did address her as 恭人 (共人) in Ode 207 “Xiaoming” 小明, which means that this claim is an assumption based on an unproven assumption. Thirdly, from other poems it can be concluded that Yin’s father-in-law was 南仲, 南 being the name of the state and 仲 was the surname; thus “仲氏任只” is referring to the daughter of 南仲 as 仲氏. Be that as it may, Li’s arguments are based on subjective reading and are unconvincing.

¹⁰⁵ Huang’s explication is debatable: according to Wang Xianqian 寡 refers to 莊姜 the widow, not the mode of a head-of-state’s self-address (Wang 1987, 141).

¹⁰⁶ The seventh stanza of “He rensi” reads: “伯氏吹壎、仲氏吹篪…” and is found to be pairing with “仲氏任只、其心塞淵…” Chao reads 伯氏 and 仲氏 as brothers (Chao 2003b, 20). However, Li Chendong reads 伯氏 of “He rensi” as the new husband to whom 仲氏 was re-married (1961, 208).

General Comment

As Confucius observes, the modality of the seven poems mentioned in this passage is “童而皆賢於其初者也”. Ma Chengyuan identifies the graphs  and  as *tong* 童 and *xian* 賢 (worthy) without further explanation (2001, 139). Li Xueqin glosses 童 as 誦 (to read) by way of *tongjia* (Li 2002b, 91). Zhou Fengwu reads 童 as *chong* 重 (repetitive) (2002, 160). Both Li and Zhou's interpretation is that the reading (or the repetitive reading) of these poems is edifying, as one may become more virtuous than before. Ikeda Tomohisa asserts that because of the stanzaic repetitions, poetic meaning becomes clear towards the end of the poems (Ikeda 2006, 377). He Linyi's reading is “動而皆賢於其初” and focuses on the elevation of emotions (instead of through reading) to a more virtuous plane (2002, 248). Reading 童 as repetition, whether in terms of citation or stanzaic structure sounds hollow as any poems can be repeatedly read, and many odes have repetitive stanzas.

A rather novel interpretation is propounded by Liu Xinfang who reads the text as “童而偕，賢於其初”，arguing that Confucius saw these seven poems as praising the harmonious relationship (*xie* 偕)¹⁰⁷ among children (*tong* 童) who have become disciplined when they come of age (賢於其初). For instance, in “Gantang”, children who by nature like to climb trees but having been cautioned that the tree is to be protected, they refrain from doing so and have thus become disciplined. In “Jiumu” before a *junzi* received official status they were minors and not adults. However, Liu concedes that his interpretation cannot be applied to “Yanyan” (2003, 24-32). Despite his sententious explication Liu's argument remains far-fetched and unconvincing.

Liao Mingchun reads “重而皆賢於其初” in which 重 means *shen* 善 or *gui* 貴 (good or precious). By this Liao means the messages of the poems (the transformation of “Guanju” 關雎之改 etc) are precious (重) because they excel their causation (皆賢於其初). Liao further explains that “Gantang” speaks of “the

¹⁰⁷ The original graph is transcribed as *jie* 皆 (in all cases), Liu reads it as 偕 which means ‘accompanying’ (in his explanation of “Jiumu”, “Hanguang”) but uses it interchangeably to mean ‘haromious’ 諧. The loan transfer of these graphs has yet to be established, without which, Liu's argument appears to be inconsistent and flawed.

transcendence of selfishness” (利己的本能的超越); “Lüyi” and “Yanyan” depict “the transcendence of fickleness” (見異思遷的本能的超越). However, when “Guanju”, “Jiumu”, “Hanguang” and “Quechao” are said to portray “the transcendence of sexual desires” (好色的本能的超越) (2002a, 263), Liao’s interpretation would appear to be inaccurate as far as “Jiumu” and “Quechao” are concerned, as the latter two poems do not concern such passions. Liao’s reading of Confucius’ comments can be adopted but alternative explanations for “Jiumu” and “Quechao” would seem necessary. For “Jiumu” it is divine blessing that transcends human endeavours (樛木之承…福斯在君子). For “Quechao” it is the generality of *li* that transcends a wedding (雀巢之歸…則蕩者). Thus, “重而皆賢於其初” is translated as: ‘[What these poems] bring to bear are the morals that are to be cherished.’

Shangbo Transcription:

孔=曰 虔呂蕃 勹尋氏 初之詩民 眚古然 ■ 見丁 兕必谷反 一本夫 蕃之見訶也 則 【16 part】 呂□蔽之古也 ■ 后稷之見貴也 ■ 則 呂文武之惠也 ■ 虔呂甘棠 尋宗廟之敬 ■ 民眚古然 甚貴 丁人必敬 丁立斂 丁人必好 丁所為 亞 丁人者亦然 【24】 帛帛之不可迭也 ■ 民眚古然 丁隱志必又 呂俞也 ■ 丁言又所載 而后內或前之 而后交人不可 隼也 虔呂折杜 尋雀 【20】 因木 菰之保 呂俞其意者也 折杜則情 熹丁至也 — 【18】 樂志既曰天也 猷又 憲言 ■ 木菰又 寢恐而未 尋達也 ■ 交 【19】 女此可斯 雀之矣 簞丁所 悉必曰 虔奚舍之 賓贈氏也 【27 part】

My Reading:

孔子曰：吾以葛覃得祇初之志，民性固然，見其美必欲反其本。夫葛之見歌也，則 【16 part】 以絺綌之故也。后稷之見貴也，則以文武之德也。吾以甘棠得宗廟之敬，民性固然，甚貴其人，必敬其位。悅其人，必好其所為。惡其人者亦然。 【24】 吾以木瓜得幣帛之不可去也。民性固然，其隱志必有以喻也。其言有所載而後納，或前之而後交，人不可隼也。吾以扶杜得爵… 【20】 …因木瓜之報，以喻其媚者也。扶杜則情喜其至也 【18】 …溺志，既曰

天也，猷有怨言。木瓜有藏願而未得達也。交…【19】如此何？斯爵之矣，離其所愛，必曰吾奚舍之，賓贈是也。【27 part】

Translation:

Confucius said, “From “**Getan**” I discern the emotion of venerating one’s ancestors. It is the emotional disposition of the people in that when something is seen as good, they would wish to retrace its origin. Dolichos are lauded 【16 part】 because from them clothing is made. Likewise Hou Ji [the ancestor] is esteemed because of the virtues of [his descendants, King] Wen and Wu. From “**Gantang**” I understand the respect paid to the ancestral temple. It is the emotional disposition of the people in that when they venerate a person, they would surely respect his position. If they are fond of a person, they would surely cherish his actions. The same applies to disliking someone... 【24】 [From “**Mugua**” I know that the rules of giving] money or silk cannot be dispensed with. People are emotionally disposed to finding means to express their implicit intents. That expression of [goodwill] has to be conveyed before it can be accepted, or, as a precursor of friendship, one must not be remiss [in observing such decorum]. From “**Didu**” I come to understand that official duty....

【20】 ... With the reciprocation of gifts, “Mugua” elucidates the expression of goodwill I am particularly moved by the profundity of the love “**Didu**” expresses... 【18】 ... [being] ignorant and having cried out to Heaven, one still vents words of regret. “**Mugua**” is about the covert intention [of cultivating friendship] that has yet to be expressed ... 【19】 How is that? That is [personal sacrifice] for the sake of official duty. Leaving one’s beloved must have impelled one to say that parting is hard to bear; [the words ring] as if they were a gift before parting. 【27 part】

Annotation:









Didu 扶杜 mentioned on Slip 18 may refer to either one of the two poems similarly entitled “Didu” 扶杜 in the “Tangfeng” 唐風 (Ode 119) or in the “Xiaoya” (Ode 169), a third one “Youdi zidu” 有扶之杜 (Ode 123) is also collected in the “Tangfeng” (it is possible that it was titled “Didu” in Confucius’ time as naming a poem after its first verse was a common practice). Textual studies of the commentary


and the poems reveal that all could be possible readings. Again Confucius’ focus is on the notion of *qing* of the poems.

“Getan” (葛覃 Ode 2)

Confucius’ comment on “Getan” is as follows:

吾以葛覃得祗初之志，民性固然，見其美必欲反其本。夫葛之見歌也，則以絺綌之故也。后稷之見貴也，則以文武之德也。



A number of lexical issues have to be dealt with first. Having transcribed  as  as 蓐 , Ma Chengyuan has not determined the title of the ode which these graphs signify (2001, 145). Li Ling and He Linyi identify them as 葛覃 by way of phonetic borrowing (Li 2002, 27; He 2002, 250). The two graphs   on the partly damaged tip of slip 24, which appear to be puzzling at first glance, have been decoded by Chen Jian 陳劍 as *chixi* 絺綌 (hemp) (2002, 375). “Getan” is a poem that features *ge* 葛, a type of vine known as *dolichos* according to Legge, as the motif. In the *Shuowen jiezi* 葛 is synonymous with 絺綌, the textile made from *ge* fibres. Whilst the graph  is usually recognized as 詩 (Ma Chengyuan 2001, 145), Liao Mingchun asserts its reading to be *zhi* 志 (intent) (2002, 264).¹⁰⁸ Ma transcribes the graph  as 兗 which stands for *mei* 美 (beautiful) or *wei* 微 (tiny) but within its context he proposes to read it as 美. On slip 16 the graph  has been identified as *yi* 一, thence “見其美必欲反‘一’本” (Ma 2001, 146). He Linyi glosses *yiben* 一本 as the root (2002, 250). However, most other scholars consider what appears as “一” on the slip is the faded graph 丌(其) (Zhou Fengwu 2002, 161; Pang Pu 2002, 239; Yu Zhihui 2002, 314; Li Rui 2002, 400).



Ma Chengyuan reads  as 氏 but notes that the meaning of “氏初之詩” is obscure (2001, 145). Zhou Fengwu identifies 氏 as 是 thus 是初之詩 means that “Getan” is a poem about one’s root (*chu* 初). The emotional disposition of the people is such that (民性固然) when one sees something beautiful, one wishes to retrace its origin (見其美必欲反其本). He Linyi suggests that 氏 refers to *shishi* 師氏, the

¹⁰⁸ The interchangeability of 詩 and 志 has been discussed in detail in Chapter 1.

matron mentioned in the third stanza (2002, 250) but this reading does not seem to make sense within the context. Liao Mingchun's reading is “祗初之志” in which *zhi* 祗 stands for respect (*jing* 敬) (2002, 264); thence “Getan” is about the respect of one's ancestral origin.


Confucius continues to affirm that *ge* is praised because of the hemp fabric (夫葛之見歌也，則以絺綌之故也), just as Hou Ji 后稷 (dates uncertain), the progenitor of the House of Zhou, was venerated because of the virtues of his descendants Kings Wen and Wu (后稷之見貴也，則以文武之德也).

Whilst the reading of 葛 and 絺綌 appears to be perfectly coherent, Chao Fulin identifies  as *meng* 蒙 (to cover) and  as *ji* 棘 (thorn shrubs) in place of 絺綌, as in the line from Ode 124 “Gesheng” 葛生: “葛生蒙棘、藟蔓于域” (The dolichos grows, / covering the thorn bushes; / The convolvulus spreads all over the tombs.) (Legge 1994, 4:186; modified) Chao argues that this poem is a panegyric on Duke Xian of Jin 晉獻公 (?- 651 BCE) for his benevolent rule, just as the growth of *ge* covering the thorn bushes (2006b, 11). Chao quotes Wang Fuzhi as the authority for this political interpretation; however this historical-political reading appears to be far-fetched, for “Gesheng” evinces a deep sense of loss of a loved one¹⁰⁹ rather than the gratification of peaceful life as Chao claims.

As another alternative Hu Pingsheng reads   as *renshu* 荏菹 (a kind of mint herb and beans). Hu remarks that Hou Ji was the first to cultivate 荏菹 and by implication, Hou Ji was venerated because of the crop. Thus “文武之德” does not refer to King Wen and Wu's virtues but Hou Ji's own virtues (2002, 279). Instead of the majority reading of 夫葛之見歌也, He Linyi's reading is 扶蘇之見歌, where *fusu* 扶蘇 (mulberry tree) refers to Ode 84 “Shanyou fusu” 山有扶蘇. He claims that the poem is about the handsome men Zidu 子都 and Zichong 子充. Thus 扶蘇之見歌也 means that “Shanyou fusu” propounds the notion that when one sees handsome men, one would retrace human beauty to human nature (2002, 250). He's exposition sounds improbable, as it ignores the context prescribed by the following sentence “則以□□之故也” by not glossing what □□ would stand for. Li Xueqin's reading is

¹⁰⁹ Feng Yuren asserts that “Gesheng” is a poem depicting the sentiments of the wife of a soldier who has been sent to the battlefield (1986, 263).

夫葛之見歌也，則以葉萋之故也 where *yeqi* 葉萋 is taken from the “Getan” verse “維葉萋萋” (Its leaves were luxuriant) (Legge 1994, 4:4; Li 2002c, 7). It is felt that luxuriant growth may not be a good enough reason for *ge* to be lauded. Liu Xinfang stops short at interpreting the commentary but instead critiques the poem from the didactic perspective of *li* (2003, 198).

Chao Fulin quotes Dong Lianchi’s view that  stands for *jue* 厥 (its), thus 厥初之志 means 其初之志 (its intent in the beginning) which renders it close to Zhou Fengwu’s reading of the graph as 是. By citing the *Liji*, Chao relates 厥初 to *li* in that *li* stems from one’s ‘beginning’ or natural instincts (2005b, 35). This comes back to Confucius’ point that ancestral respect is an attitude to which people are emotionally disposed. The emotional motif of this poem will be discussed in Chapter 4. I shall also argue in Chapter 5 that 民性 is not simply human nature but also emotions.

“Gantang” (甘棠 Ode 16)

Further to his earlier comment on “Gantang” Confucius has this to say:

吾以甘棠得宗廟之敬，民性固然，甚貴其人，必敬其位。悅其人，必好其所為。惡其人者亦然。

The transcription of the Chu graphs here is relatively straightforward. From this poem Confucius comes to understand the meaning of paying respect to the ancestral temple (宗廟之敬). Likewise he ascribes this respect to the emotional disposition of the people (民性固然) which enables the reverence of the person to be extended to his official position, and from liking the person (悅其人) to liking what he does (必好其所為). The reverse situation of disliking a person is also true (惡其人者亦然). The implicit meaning of this poem will be discussed in Chapter 4.

“Mugua” (木瓜 Ode 64)



Confucius comments on “Mugua” as follows:


吾以木瓜得幣帛之不可去也。民性固然，其隱志必有以喻也。其言有所載而後納，或前之而後交，人不可狃也…

因木瓜之報，以喻其媿者也…

木瓜有藏願而未得達也。

Though the tip of slip 20 is broken and the title of the poem is missing, Ma Chengyuan asserts that the text is a comment on “Mugua”. Ma also points out that *bibo* 幣帛 (money and silk) refers to coins, jade pieces and silk fabrics which, according to Zheng Xuan, were gift items in ancient times (2001, 149). Chi and Zheng propose to reinstate the text with ‘吾以木瓜得’ as shown above (2004, 44). This reading has the support from most other scholars. It is from “Mugua” that Confucius comes to know the custom of gift giving as people’s emotional disposition that cannot be dispensed with (幣帛之不可去也。民性固然).

The reading of the graph  as 隱 has been discussed in detail previously (see annotation on slip 1; 隱 means ‘hidden or implicit’). The graph  lends itself to different readings: Ma Chengyuan reads it as 逾 but as such its meaning in the context is obscure (2001, 149). Wang Zhiping glosses it as *tou* 偷, meaning *gouqie* 苟且 (careless) (2002, 221), but “其吝志必有以偷也” (its implicit intent must be [a] careless [expression]) is antithetical to the affirmative tone of the context. Li Ling notes that it should be read as *shu* 輸 (to relief), which alludes to *shu* 抒 (pour out) (2002, 23). Most other commentators read it as *yu* 喻 (to communicate) (Zhou Fengwu 2002, 162; Pang Pu 2002, 239), thus “其隱志必有以喻也” can be rendered as: ‘one’s implicit intention must find means of expression’. This interpretation is adopted in this translation.

The meaning of the graph  remains dubious despite substantial exegetical efforts. Its pictographic construction has been recognized as 角 over 干, that is 犖, an erstwhile unknown word. Huang Huaixin reads it as *gan* 乾 (dry), and explains 人不可乾也 as one who tries to pick up salt by dipping in it with a dry finger (without even the minimal effort of first moistening the finger). Huang further claims that this alludes to a guest who goes to a social engagement empty handed (without bearing gift) (2004, 61). Chi and Zheng identify 犖 as *han* 捍 (to oppose) (2004, 49). Zhou Fengwu reads it as *gan* 干, and 人不可干也 means violating the rules of etiquette for receiving guests, an interpretation which Zhou deduces from the *Gongyang zhuan* 公羊傳 (2002, 162). Other scholars read the graph as *chu* 觸 (to violate) (Zhang Guiguang 2002, 341; Liu Xinfang 2003, 214). These readings tend to say that the exchange of gift is a custom that should not be violated. Wei Yihui contends that the


radicals of the graph are 角 over *niu* 牛 (an ox) instead of 干, thence the character 𠂔 which is equivalent to 𠂔 and is to be read as *shu* 屬 (to grasp the meaning). Wei suggests “人不可屬也” means that the poem is difficult to understand (2002, 390). In fact the poem is not as obscure as Wei thinks. Cao Feng further transfers 屬 by phonetic loan to *du* 瀆 (to desecrate), implying that the non-observance of the rules of exchanging gifts is sacrilegious (2002), a much more serious allegation than *faux pas*. Wei’s reading of the graph as 𠂔 is correct but his exegesis falls short of identifying it as the archaic form of *cu* 粗 (coarse). Chao Fulin also identifies this graph as 粗, but he glosses it to mean *cubao* 粗暴 (brutal) or *culu* 粗魯 (rude). Chao further explains that because of self-esteem people would not wish to be treated rudely, and that Confucius sees gifts as the bonding agent for human relations¹¹⁰ in accordance with *li* (2005c, 114). It is felt that Chao’s interpretation misses the point of Confucius’ thought of *li* of gift-giving.


I hold that the reading of this graph as 𠂔 is correct but the interpretation of Confucius’ comment is different from those of Wei or Chao. Textual examples of 𠂔 can be found in the *Gongyang zhuan*: “𠂔者曰侵，精者曰伐” (to invade is crude, to conquest, refined – my translation) in which 𠂔 is glossed as *cu* 粗 (crude, unrefined). Another example can be taken from “Xuzhuan” of the *Hanshu* 漢書·敘傳: “𠂔舉僚職” (summarily listing the posts) in which 𠂔 is glossed as *dalue* 大略 (summarily). According to the *Shuowen jiezi*, 粗 means *shu* 疏 (negligent). It can be seen that 𠂔 assumes the meaning of 粗疏 (casual, remiss, or perfunctory), and this meaning comes through clearly within its context, which sees the *li* of offering gift as a procedure exercised with care and seriousness. Thus “其言有所載而後納，或前之而後交，人不可𠂔也” can be translated as: ‘that expression of [goodwill] has to be conveyed before it can be accepted, or as a precursor of friendship, one must not be remiss [in observing such decorum]’.

There are alternative readings of the above. Li Ling’s version is “其吝志必有以輸也。其言有所載而後入，或前之而後效…” Li glosses the text to mean ‘its hidden intention has to be poured out. What is said in the poem (“Mugua”) has to have a message, which makes its way to one’s mind, or its effect can be seen after it

¹¹⁰ In Chao’s own words, “饋贈幣帛之類的禮物，可以視為人際關係的黏合劑。”

has been cited' (2002, 24). Li's exposition is considered to be a generalization on the effect of poetry, not particularly critical on "Mugua".

As mentioned in the annotations on "Gantang" (slip 10) the graph  (保) can be read as *bao* 報 (requital, return). Ma Chengyuan points out that 報 is taken from the couplet "投我以木瓜、報之以瓊琚" (There was presented to me a quince, / And I returned for it a beautiful Ju-gem.) (Legge 1994, 4:107 modified; Ma 2001, 148)

Ma glosses  (寘) as *juan* 捐 (to give) which refers to the presentation and return of gifts as mentioned in the above verses. Huang Huaixin reads 寘 as *yuan* 願 (wish) (2004, 92). Li Ling glosses the graph as *yuan* 怨 (grudge) (2002, 24). Liao Mingchun asserts that the graph should be read as *juan* 娟 (good) (2002, 268). Thus "因木瓜之報，以喻其娟者也…木瓜有藏願而未得達也" can be understood as: 'With the reciprocation of gifts, "Mugua" elucidates the expression of goodwill "Mugua" is about the implicit intention [of cultivating friendship] that has yet to be communicated.'

There are, however, different interpretations of the passage such as He Linyi's reading: "交人不可盱也" (do not ogle a beautiful woman) (2002, 252). He claims that 交人, read as 佼人 (a beauty), was the title used in the bamboo text for the poem "Yuechu" 月出 (Ode 143). It is felt that He's interpretation is incongruent with the context of Confucius' comments on gifts and friendship.

Another interpretation is propounded by Wang Zhiping who attributes the entire passage to the explication of Ode 58 "Mang" 氓 with altogether a different reading: "其吝志必有以偷也。其言有所采而後納，或親之而後交，人不可解也" (2002, 220). Wang's exegesis is disjointed and is difficult to relate coherently to the poem for a meaningful translation. Yet another interpretation of the passage is advanced by Chao Fulin who contends that Confucius' comment here refers to "Luming" 鹿鳴 (Ode 161) rather than "Mugua". Chao quotes Wang Fuzhi, whose radical view on "Mugua" is that the poem derides the hypocrisy of returning valuable gift for less valuable gifts received. "Luming" depicts a banquet in which guests were presented with basketful of gifts (承筐是將) (2005c, 113) but this is not the theme of "Luming". Chao's interpretation is considered to have taken the poetry out of context.

Amidst all the possible readings it appears almost certain that Confucius’ commentary under review is on “Mugua”. Exophoric support can be drawn from a parallel discourse found in the *Kongcongzi* 孔叢子¹¹¹ which can be cross-referenced not only to “Mugua” but also a number of poems mentioned in “Kongzi shilun”:

孔子讀詩及小雅，喟然而歎曰：吾於 … 柏舟見匹婦執志之不可易也 … 於木瓜見苞苴之禮行也 … 於蟋蟀見陶唐儉德之大也 … 於鹿鳴見君臣之有禮也 … 於節南山見忠臣之憂世也 … 於蓼莪見孝子之思養也 … 於裳裳者華見古之賢者世保其祿也 … (Kong, 21-2).

Reading the *Shi* and “Xiaoya”, Confucius exclaimed: “From “Bozhou” I understand the tenacity of a woman’s unwavering will … from “Mugua” [I] discern the practice of gift giving; … from “Xishuai”, Tao Tang’s great virtue of frugality; from “Luming”, the rites between the sovereign and his ministers; from “Jie nan shan”, the loyal minister’s worries of the time; from “Liao e”, a pious son’s thought of serving his parents; … from “Changchang zhehua”, [I note] the virtuous ancients keeping wealth for generations (My translation)

In the above passage *baoju* 苞苴 refers to a kind of matting of woven plants and leaves for wrapping gifts in ancient times. It is as much a metonymy of gifts as 幣帛 is a synecdoche of presents (Liao 2002, 266). Thus the parallel text from the *Kongcongzi* indicates that the text in question from “Kongzi shilun” is unlikely to be a commentary on the poem “Mang” as Wang Zhiping has suggested, but is almost certain to be the comments on “Mugua”. On the other hand this poem has been read as a love song and is rich in the symbolism of *qing*, a topic to be further explored in Chapter 4.




“Didu” (杕杜 Ode 169)

The following is Confucius’ comment on the poem “Didu”. As previously noted there are three poems that answer to this title and it remains to be seen to which “Didu” these comments refer:


吾以杕杜得爵 …
杕杜則情喜其至也 …
如此何？斯爵之矣，離其所愛，必曰吾奚捨之，賓贈是也。

¹¹¹ See note 40.

The answer to the above question lies in the key words *jue*  (雀), *ai* 

(, and *binzeng*   (賓贈). According to the *Shuowen jiezi* 雀 is a homophone of *jue* 爵, and by phonetic loan it can be glossed to mean ‘peerage’ or ‘public office’. The graph 恣 has been generally recognized as *ai* 愛 which means love or affection. The term 賓贈 can be understood as gift presented to or by a guest (Huang Huaixin 2004, 63).

Zhou Fengwu reads 雀 as *jiao* 醕 (to drink wine) and considers that the comments here are meant for Ode 123 “Youdi zhidu” of the “Tangfeng” (2002, 162). Whilst this poem speaks of food and drink to be provided to the *junzi*, it evinces little or no passionate sentiments that could justifiably be described as *qingzhi* 情至 (full of emotion). Chi and Zheng observe that this poem speaks of receiving the *junzi* and giving him public office (爵) to attract him to stay (2004, 51). It is felt that this is rather far-fetched as too much meaning has to be read into the offer of food and wine as incentives for public office.

Liao Mingchun identifies  (恚) as *xi* 禧 and glosses it to mean *tong* 痛 (anguish). By “杖杜情禧其至也” Liao asserts that it refers to “Didu” of the “Tangfeng” (Ode 119) in which the poet grieves his solitude and helplessness (2002, 268).¹¹²

Ma Chengyuan, among others, proposes that Confucius’ comment here refers to “Didu” of the “Xiaoya” (Ma 2001, 148; Huang Huaixin 2004, 66-7; Cao Jiangguo 2004, 75). They argue that the verse “王事靡盬” (The king’s business must not be slackly performed) points to the identity of the poet (or the protagonist) as a holder of public or military office (爵). The lines “女心悲止、征夫歸止 … 憂我父母” (But my heart is sad. / O that my soldier might return! /... And our parents are made sorrowful) (Legge 1994, 4:266) express profound connubial and familial love. Congruity of meaning is thus found in the bamboo text: ‘From “Didu” I come to understand that official duty... (吾以杖杜得爵 …) I am particularly moved by the profundity of the love “Didu” expresses... (杖杜則情喜其至也 …). How is that (如此何)? That is [sacrifice] for the sake of official duty (斯爵之矣). Leaving one’s

¹¹² Refer to verses from Ode 119 such as “人無兄弟、胡不飲焉” (Without brothers as I am, / Why do ye not help me?) (Legge 1994, 4:181)

beloved must have impelled one to say that parting is hard to bear (離其所愛，必曰吾奚捨之); [the words ring] as if they were a gift before parting (賓贈是也). This is the adopted translation.

Alternative readings of 賓贈 open up possibilities that Confucius' comment here relates to other poems. Li Ling's reading of the bamboo text is: …如此，何斯誚之矣。離其所愛，必曰吾奚捨之，賓贈是也 in which 何斯 is read as the title of a poem which is known as Ode 199 “He rensi” 何人斯 of the received *Odes*; the graph 爵 is a phonetic loan to be read as *qiao* 誚 (to ridicule), and “離其所愛，必曰吾奚捨之，賓贈是也” is the commentary for another poem. Li glosses 賓贈 to be gifts presented to the dead during burial ceremonies. Whilst the theme of “He rensi” is surely a ridicule of the wicked”;¹¹³ it leaves the sentences “離其所愛” etc unexplained. Li's belief that they relate to “Gantang” (2002, 29) is not supported by the bamboo text or the poem. Liao Mingchun suggests that “離其所愛…” applies to another poem – Ode 134 “Weiyang” 渭陽 – as he reads 賓贈 as 贈賓, which forms part of the official rituals of *pinli* 聘禮. Citing support from the “Little preface” and Zheng Xuan, Liao believes that “Weiyang” depicts the scene in which Duke Kong of Qin 秦康公 (? – 609 BCE), when he was still the crown prince, bid farewell to his mother's nephew Prince Chong Er 重耳 (697-628 BCE). This poem expresses a deep sense of affection and mentions the gifts of horses and gems (2004a, 50).¹¹⁴ Another different reading is proposed by Cao Jianguo who, whilst agreeing to Confucius' comment being applicable to “Didu” of the “Xiaoya” and the explication of official duty to be the theme of “He rensi”, reads “離其所愛，必曰吾奚捨之，賓贈是也” in which 賓贈 refers to the title of a poem lost during transmission (2004, 124; also see Yu Zhihui 2002, 321).

The above are all possible interpretations of the bamboo text, but no single one can claim to be the only correct reading. There are many factors precluding a definitive answer: the slip sequence may not be correct; there could be missing slips;

¹¹³ The theme of “He rensi” is self-revealing in the poem: “作此好歌、以極反側” (I have made this good song, / To probe to the utmost your veerings and turnings.) (Legge 1994, 4:346)

¹¹⁴ As can be seen in the last stanza of “Weiyang”: “我送舅氏、悠悠我思。何以贈之、瓊瑰玉佩” (I escorted my mother's nephew, / Long, long did I think of him. /What did I present to him? / A precious jasper, and gems for his girdle-pendant.) Gift of horses is mentioned in the first stanza: “路車乘黃” (Four bay horses for his carriage of state.) (Legge 1994, 4:203)

the Chu graphs may not have been identified correctly, or terms such as 賓贈 could have different meanings to the modern vernacular. It is also possible that Confucius was addressing untransmitted poems similarly titled “Didu”. However for the purpose of this translation Ode 169 is taken to be the poem to which Confucius’ commentary refers.

“Beimen” (北門 Ode 26) and others

As the tip of slip 19 is broken; the text that ought to be there could have contained the title of the poem to which the comment ... “*灋*志，既曰天也，猷有怨言” relates. He Linyi glosses *灋* as *ni* 溺, having compared the graph similar to that of the Guodian text, which means 沒 (without) (2002, 251). Cao Jianguo elaborates on the meaning of 溺志 as *wushi* 無識 (ignorant) in terms of resenting the way of Heaven (*yuantian* 怨天) (2010, 74).¹¹⁵ Yu Zhihui identifies six possible poems which would answer, to varying degree, to the motif of 怨天:

Ode 26 “Beimen” 北門 of the “Beifeng” 北風

Ode 45 “Bozhou” 柏舟 of the “Yongfeng” 邶風

Ode 47 “Junzi xielao” 君子偕老 of the “Yongfeng”

Ode 65 “Shuli” 黍離 of the “Wangfeng” 王風

Ode 121 “Baoyu” 鵲羽 of the “Tangfeng” 唐風

Ode 131 “Huangnao” 黃鳥 of the “Qinfeng” 秦風

Yu identifies “Beimen” to be the most likely poem to which Confucius’ comment refers (2002, 315), for it expresses more than the others a sense of resentment as the first stanza may suggest:

出自北門	I go out at the north gate,
憂心殷殷	With my heart full of sorrow.
終窶且貧	Straitened am I and poor
莫知我艱已焉哉	And no one takes knowledge of my distress. So it is!
天實為之	Heaven has done it; -
謂之何哉	What then shall I say?

(Legge 1994, 4:65-6)

¹¹⁵ In this regard, Cao quotes from “Of Honour and Disgrace” of the *Xunzi* 荀子·榮辱: “知命者不怨天…怨天者無志” (those who know fate do not resent Heaven ... those who resent Heaven do not learn from experience, and from “On the model for conduct” 法行: “怨天者無識” (same translation) (Knoblock 1988, 1:188, 3:257).

Cao Jianguo's choice is also “Beimen” in view of the poet's complaint of hardship being clearly discernible (2010, 74). Other scholars nominate the poem “Junzi xielao” in view of the line “胡言而天也、胡然而帝也” (She appears like a visitant from heaven! / She appears like a goddess.) (Legge 1994, 4:77) Liao Mingchun quotes from the “Little preface” that this poem lampoons the licentiousness of the Duchess of Wei 衛夫人, and considers “既曰天也” to be an exclamation of her perfect beauty, whilst “猷有怨言” resents her failure to serve her lord (2002, 267). However, this reading does not relate to 燕志 (whatever 燕 means), which can be reasonably assumed to have prescribed the context of the next two sentences, as there is no punctuation mark between them. Huang Huaixin reads 燕志 as *qiangzhi* 強志 (strong willpower) and asserts that “Bozhou” is the poem to which this comment relates. Huang reads this poem as a young girl's lamentation of her fate when her parents disapprove of her lover. Her strong willpower is expressed through the lines “之死矢靡它 …之死矢靡慝” (And I swear that till death I will have no other. / ... And I swear that till death I will not do the evil thing.) (Legge 1994, 4:74) Huang also contends that the line “母也天只、不諒人只” (O mother, O Heaven, / Why will you not understand me?) (Legge 1994, 4:73) is, to all intents and purposes, resentment of Heaven (2004, 89). Yang Zesheng interprets “Bozhou” as an expression of regret of the distrust by one's parents despite one's immaculate conduct (2002b). Chi and Zheng read 燕 as 溺 and gloss 溺志 as *xianni zhizhi* 陷溺之志 (resoluteness), which is synonymous with *qiangzhi* 強志 (strong will). Zheng adds that “Bozhou” aligns with Confucius' comment, as the poem is a widow's lamentation of being forced by her parents to re-marry (2004, 51).

The arguments for adopting “Beimen” or “Bozhou” as the poem critiqued are as strong as those against them. For this translation, 溺志 is taken to mean ignorant of the way of Heaven and “Beimen” is the nominated poem.

Shangbo Transcription:

孔=曰七衛賢難■中氏君子■北風不幽人之怨予立不【27 part】東方未明又利訖■酒中之言不可不韋也■湯之水刀悉婦愁■菜菔之悉婦【17】

My Reading:

孔子曰：蟋蟀知難。仲氏君子。北風不絕人之怨。子立不 … 【27 part】 … 東方未明有利詞。將仲[子]之言不可不畏也。揚之水其愛婦烈。采葛之愛婦 … 【17】

Translation:

Confucius said, “**“Xishuai”** is about recognizing the difficulty [in life]. **“Zhongshi”** is about the [virtuous] *junzi*. **“Beifeng”** evinces people’s endless consternation. **“Zi li”** does not … 【27 part】 … **“Dongfang weiming”** contains sharp words [of criticism]. **“Jiang Zhong [Zi]”** is about being in awe of words. **“Yang Zhi Shui”** is about [the poet’s] ardent love of his wife. **“Caige”** is about [the poet’s] love of his wife.... 【17】

Annotation:

The poems discussed in this passage are taken from the “Feng” division. Commentators are in general agreement to the titles as identified, except 中氏 and 子立.

“Xishuai” (蟋蟀 Ode 114)

In the above passage Confucius said that the lesson from “Xishuai” is ‘knowing what is difficult’ (*zhinan* 知難). The poem opens with an appeal to enjoy life because time is fleeting: “今我不樂、日月其除” (If we do not enjoy ourselves now, / The days and months will be leaving us.) However, the poet cautions against sybaritism and considers official duties to be more important: “無已大康、職思其居” (But let us not go to great excess, / Let us first think of the duties of our position). Although *joie de vivre* is not to be deprecated, moderation and judiciousness are what a responsible person should uphold “好樂無荒、良士瞿瞿” (Let us not be wild in our love of enjoyment. / The good man is anxiously thoughtful.) (Legge 1994, 4:174) What Confucius refers to as difficulty, according to Ma Chengyuan, is ephemerality (2001, 157). Huang Huaixin contends that the passage of time is a natural phenomenon and should hardly be regarded as difficulty. Quoting from the

Kongcongzi that “Xishuai” expounds Tao Tang’s (陶唐) great virtue of frugality,¹¹⁶ Huang asserts that what Confucius means by difficulty is frugality or self-control (2004, 69-72). In fact the poem is full of emotional fissures: as the cricket is chirping the year away, one is well justified to enjoy life. But being a good man, one should place one’s official duties first and abstain from excessive pleasure. As frugality can only be achieved by resolute temperance, the recognition and practice of which, according to Confucius, is the difficulty as expounded in “Xishuai”.

Zhongshi 仲氏

The term 君子 in *Zhongshi junzi* “仲氏君子” is generally taken to mean the virtues of the *junzi* as expostulated in the poem (Ma Chengyuan 2001, 158); which poem that might be remains to be investigated. The name *Zhongshi* appears in several poems: Ode 199 “He rensi” 何人斯 from the “Xiaoya” and Ode 28 “Yanyan” which is the subject of previous discussion. *Zhongshi* is only mentioned in passing in Ode 199 in a context that does not concern the virtues of *junzi*. As previously mentioned, the putative 仲氏 in “Yanyan” is Daigui 戴嬀, the concubine of Duke Zhuang of Wei; she would not have been addressed by the title of *junzi* which is reserved for men (Huang 2004, 49, 73). Yang Zisheng surveys the poems in which 仲氏 appears and only in the last stanza of “Yanyan” are the virtues of *junzi* mentioned. Yang re-opens the old debate on the question whether the last stanza of “Yanyan” belongs to another unknown poem (2002, 360). Chao Fulin asserts that it could have been the seventh stanza of “He rensi” (2003b, 16). Hu Pingsheng postulates that it could refer to *Zhongshenfu* 仲山甫 of Ode 260 “Zhengmin” 烝民 from the “Daya” (2002, 284).¹¹⁷ As Huang Huaixin points out, listed in Confucius’ discourse here are poem titles and it stands to reason that *Zhongshi* is the title of a poem. As *Zhongshenfu* has not been eclipsed as *Zhongshi* in the poem; it is unlikely that the “Zhengmin” could have been alternatively titled as “*Zhongshi*” (2004, 73).

Li Ling suggests that by phonetic borrowing, 中氏 refers to the poem 蟋斯 (Ode 5) (2002, 30), so does He Linyi (2002, 255). In this poem the prolificacy of the

¹¹⁶ See earlier discussion on “Mugua”.

¹¹⁷ Hu argues that the lines from “Zhengmin”: “仲山甫之德、柔嘉維則，令儀令色、小心翼翼 …” (The virtue of Zhong Shan-fu, / Is mild and admirable, according as it ought to be. / Good is his deportment; good his looks; / The lessons of antiquity are his law; He is strenuously attentive to his deportment....) (Legge 1994, 4:542) clearly describes the virtues of a *junzi*.

locusts (螽) bears metaphorical well wishes of fertility. However, throughout the poem there is not the slightest mention of the virtues of *junzi*. According to the “Little preface”, this poem praises the queen and consorts whose unselfishness results in their having a bevy of offspring. Chi and Zheng add that the queen and consorts are virtuous because the *junzi* is virtuous (2004, 53). It is felt that such hackneyed interpretations grounding on moralistic considerations lack textual support. On the other hand, it may be possible that the graph 𧈧 (duo 多 plenty) might have been misprinted as 君 (君), in which case 螽斯多子 (“Zhongshi” is about having large numbers of descendants) instead of “螽斯君子” would have made better sense. However, this reading is speculative in the absence of substantive evidence.

As noted above it appears that the identification of “Zhongshi” is inconclusive. The answer to this question awaits further evidence to emerge, but in the mean time 仲氏 is rendered in this translation as the title of a lost ode.

“Beifeng” (北風 Ode 41)

Whilst 北風 is generally recognized as the poem title “Beifeng”, a number of ways to read “北風不絕人之怨子立不 …” have been proposed. Ma Chengyuan’s reading is “北風不絕，人之怨子立不…” the meaning of which cannot be ascertained (Ma 2001, 158, also see He Linyi 2002, 255). Li Ling reads it as “北風不絕人之怨，子立不…” treating *zili* 子立 as the title of a lost poem (2002, 30). Feng Shenjun reads 子立 as the poem titled “Zijin” 子衿 (Ode 91) (2002, 12), but there is no endophoric support of this reading. Huang Huaixin prefers the reading “北風不絕”, and argues that “Beifeng” depicts a girl being led away by the hand of her lover in the wind and snow without showing any resentment (2004, 80). The traditional interpretation of this poem is, as Fang Yurun puts it, about the worthies escaping the chaos of a falling state. The poem opens with a gloomy scene: “北風其涼、雨雪其雱” (Cold blows the north wind; / Thick falls the snow) but soon introduces the red foxes and black crows adumbrating ill omen: “莫赤匪狐、莫黑匪烏” (Nothing red is seen but foxes, / Nothing black but crows) (Legge 1994, 4:67-8) which Fang considers as a metaphor of anarchy (Fang 1986, 146-7). Zhou Fengwu considers that

絕 could have been misread for what is meant as *ji* 繼 (to continue) citing its identification from other bamboo scripts. His reading “北風不繼人之怨” is predicated on an alternative reading of the theme of “Beifeng” as inspired by the *Jiaoshi yilin* 焦氏易林. Zhou postulates that the narrative of the coldness of the north wind is synaesthetic of the ill-feelings of failed friendship and the holding of hand symbolizes reconciliation (2002, 164). Thus “不繼人之怨” can be understood as ‘setting aside previous quarrels between friends’. For the purpose of translation Fang Yurun’s interpretation of “Beifeng” is adopted. Thus the text is read as “北風不絕人之怨” and rendered as: “‘Beifeng’ evinces people’s endless consternation’, which is perhaps evident in the sub-text of having to leave one’s homeland in haste (其虛其邪、既亟只且 – Is it a time for delay? / The urgency is extreme). However, Huang Huaixin’s reading of the poem is not to be disregarded and he interprets “北風不絕...” as a girl having not refused his lover taking her on an unknown journey. Thus punctuated, Huang argues, the sentence conforms to the four-character rhetorical pattern. However, this renders the reading of “人之怨子” problematic. Following Huang’s rationale 人之 has to be a poem title, a possibility which can be considered remote, and that the four-character rhetorical pattern is not necessarily a rigid one. Huang suggests to read “人之怨子，立（泣）不” to be followed by an insertion of ‘敢言，雨無正是也’ (2004, 79-85) (A man resents his friends, cries but not daring to tell the truth, which is [the purpose] of the ode “Yu wu zheng”). Huang’s interpretation is a reasonable attempt for consideration.

“Dongfang weiming” (東方未明 Ode 100)

Confucius’ key word to unlock the meaning of “Dongfang weiming” is *licí* 利詞 which, according to Ma Chengyuan, refers to an attendant’s grouch against his lord’s disorderly court (2001, 146). Ma does not explain what 利詞 means, but refers to these lines:

東方未明	Before the east was bright,
顛倒衣裳	I was putting on my clothes upside down.
顛之倒之	was putting them on upside down,
自公召之...	And there was one from the court calling me....
不能辰夜	He, [however], cannot fix the time of night;


不夙則莫 If he be not too early, he is sure to be late.
(Legge 1994, 4:155)

By implication, 利詞 could possibly mean ‘sharp words’ of criticism, a reading supported by Liu Xinfang (2003, 199). Li Ling reads 詞 as *shi* 始, which means early morning (2002, 34). However Li does not explain what early morning means within the context of the poem. Wang Zhiping prefers to read 利 as *li* 戾 (violent) (2002, 219) but 戾詞 – violent words – may be too strong a description for these verses which are sharp but not violent. Xunzi asserts that this poem is about the *li* of the ministers serving their lord; in their rush responding to summons they put their clothes ‘upside down’ but the hurry is in accordance with ritual practice (*Xunzi* 27.4; Knoblock 1988, 3.208). Whilst contending that this poem is a peasant slave’s song rather than that of a court attendant, Huang Huaixin concurs to reading 利詞 as sharp words (2004, 96). For translation purposes 利詞 is taken as ‘sharp words of criticism’.

“Jiang zhong [zi]” (將仲[子] Ode 76)



According to Ma Chengyuan the bamboo text 鄕中 corresponds to the poem “Jiang Zhong Zi” 將仲子 (2001, 146). This poem is about a young girl’s plea to her lover not to break into her house: “將仲子兮、無踰我里” (I pray you, Mr Zhong, Do not come leaping into my hamlet.) It is not because she does not love him, but because the words of her parents, her brothers and even the talk of the people are to be feared (仲可懷也、父母之言…諸兄之言…人之多言、亦可畏也) (Legge 1994, 4:125-7). Thus “將仲子之言不可不畏也” can be rendered as: “Jiang Zhong Zi” is about being in awe of words.

“Yang zhi shui” (揚之水 Ode 68)

There are three poems by the same title of “Yang zhi shui” 揚之水: Ode 68 of the “Wangfeng” 王風, Ode 92 of the “Zhengfeng” 鄭風 and Ode 116 of the “Tangfeng” 唐風. One of the key words concerning the poem, the Chu graph  which Ma Chengyuan identifies as 愬, means *hen* 恨 (plaintiveness) or *dai* 怠 (languish). Considering both Ode 92 and Ode 116 to be void of amorous emotions,

Ma states that the comment “其愛婦恨” (one’s beloved wife’s regret) refers to a woman’s regret expressed in Ode 68. Ma quotes these verses as support: “懷哉懷哉、曷月予還歸哉” (How I think of him! How I think of him! / What month shall I return home?) (Legge 1994, 4:114, modified to read ‘him’ from ‘her’; Ma 2001, 147). In fact these lines are more likely to be a soldier’s longing for returning home to his wife, rather than his wife’s pining for her husband to return from afar as Ma has suggested. The alternative reading of 其愛婦怠 (one’s beloved wife languishing) (Zhou Fengwu 2002, 161) does not have textual support from either poem. Li Ling prefers to read 慙 as *lie* 烈 (ardent) and holds the opposite view that “其愛婦烈” (his love for his wife is ardent) is a comment more pertinent to Ode 92, which contains words of mutual encouragement between lovers (2002, 34). However, the lines of this poem “終鮮兄弟、維予與女。無信人之言、人實廷女” (Few are our brethren; / There are only I and you. / Do not believe what people say; / They are deceiving you) (Legge 1994, 4:145) sound more rational than passionate to be a love song, let alone any tincture of ardent love. Wang Zhiping prefers to read 慙 as *li* 戾 (violent) (2002, 219) but does not take the interpretation further. Liu Xinfang reads 慙 as *hen* 恨 (regret), and holds the view that Ode 116 expresses ardent love and regret in these lines: “既見君子、云何不樂” (When we have seen the princely lord, / Shall we not rejoice?) and “我聞有命、不敢以告人” (We have heard your orders, / And will not dare to inform any one of them.) (Legge 1994, 4:178; Liu 2003, 203). Chi and Zheng consider none of the three poems have any connection with ardent love (2002, 55). Huang Huaixin agrees to the reading of “其愛婦烈” and nominates Ode 68 to be the poem to which the comment here applies, but interprets it to mean that it is about [the poet’s] ardent love of his wife (2004, 98). This reading is adopted in this translation.

“Caige” (采葛 Ode 72)

Ma Chengyuan transcribes the Chu graphs   as 菜蔕 without identifying the poem (2001, 147). Li Ling and others identify the poem as “Caige” 采葛 (Ode 72) (Li 2002, 34; HeLinyi 2002, 251; Li Shoukui 2002, 344). As the slip is broken at this point the incomplete text “采葛之愛婦…” suggests that it is another amorous song. Passionate love is in fact clearly discernible from the couplet of

“Caige”: “一日不見、如三月兮” (A day without seeing her, / Is like three months!) (Legge 1994, 4:120; modified) This could have prompted Huang Huaixin to insert the word *qie* 切 (earnest) – 采葛之愛婦[切], which can be translated as “Caige” is about [the poet’s] earnest love of his wife.

4. The *Feng* 風 and *Ya* 雅 Poems

Shangbo Transcription:

麋廌呂樂訶而會 呂道交見善而孝冬 虐不厭人 ■ 兔 虐 刀 甬 人 則 虐 取 【23】
 腸=少人 ■ 又兔不弄皆 ■ 大田之采章 暫言而又豐 ■ 少明不 【25】 忠 ■ 北白
 舟悶 ■ 浴風 忤 ■ 蓼莪又孝志 ■ 隲又長楚尋而慙之也 【26】 亞而不慶 牂又
 薺慙密而不暫言 ■ 青蠅暫 【28】 惹而不暫人 ■ 涉秦刀 幽律而士 ■ 角幡婦 ■
 河水暫 【29】 貴也 贊大車之囂也則 呂為不可女可也 審 零之 驟也 刀 猷 乾
 與 【21 part】

My Reading:

…鹿鳴以樂，始而會以道，交見善而效，終乎不厭人。兔置其用人則吾取
 【23】 …君[子]陽陽小人。兔爰不逢時。大田之卒章，知言而有禮。小明不…
 【25】 … 忠。邶柏舟悶。谷風悲。蓼莪有孝志。隲有萋楚得而悔之也…
 【26】 …相[鼠]言 惡而不憫。牆有茨慎密而不知言。青蠅知… 【28】 …患而不
 知人。涉秦[褰裳]其絕，著而士。角枕[葛生]婦。河水智 【29】 …貴也。[無]
 將大車之囂也，則以為不可如何也。湛露之溢也，其猷乾歟。 【21 part】

Translation:

“**Luming**” is about state banquets; the opening stanza describes the congress as an opportunity [for the partakers] to share moral experiences. In their interaction they learn from one another the paragon of virtue, but in the end their [appetite for goodness] was insatiable. I endorse the people employed [as portrayed in] “**Tuju**”...


【23】 “[**Junzi yangyang**]” is about a petty man. “**Tuyuan**” discusses a man born into an inopportune era. The final stanza of “**Datian**” is about the effective instruction of propriety [through action]. “**Xiaoming**” is not 【25】 loyal

“**Bozhou**” of the “Beifeng” expresses melancholy. “**Gufeng**” speaks of grief. “**Liao e**” expresses filial piety. “**Xiyou changchu**” regrets one’s possession ... **【26】** ... [**Xiangshu**] is about intense animosity. “**Qiang youci**” tells of secretive talks that cannot be divulged. “**Qingying**” is about not knowing ... **【28】** ... grievance but not knowing people. “Sheqin” [**Qianchang**] shows resoluteness. “**Zhe**” is about a bridegroom. “Jiaozhen” [**Gesheng**] speaks of a woman [longing for her husband]. “**Heshui**” tells of intelligence ... **【29】** ... nobility.... The notion of feeling at ease as expressed in “[**Wu**] **jiang dache**” is in fact a feeling of helplessness. The praises in “**Zhanlu**” are offered without hesitation. **【21 part】**

Annotation:

This passage concerns poems taken from the “Feng” and “Ya” divisions. Three putative titles 律而, 角幡 and 河水 are not found in the received text.

“Luming” (鹿鳴 Ode 161)

In depicting the proceedings of a state banquet, “Luming” extols the cordiality and the rituals between the liege lord and the ministers, his guests. Ma Chengyuan identifies the graph  as *ci* 詞 (lyrics) (2001, 152), but Li Ling and others read it as *shi* 始 (to begin). Rhetorically “鹿鳴以樂始” (In “Luming”, [the reception] begins with music) is parallel to “終乎不厭人” (in the end nobody is unhappy) (Li 2002, 38; Liu Lexian 2002, 384; Zhou Fengwu 2002, 163; Liu Xinfang 2003, 231). This reading is underlined by the couplet in the first stanza of the poem: “我有嘉賓、鼓瑟吹笙” (I have here admirable guests; / The lutes are struck, and the organ is blown [for them]), and that of the last stanza: “我有旨酒、以燕樂嘉賓之心” (I have good wine, / To feast and make glad the hearts of my admirable guests.) (Legge 1994, 4:245-7) The remaining comment concerning the poem – “而會以道交見善而傲” – lends itself to different readings depending on how it is punctuated, but the syntactic variations make only subtle differences in meaning. For instance, Ma Chengyuan’s reading: “鹿鳴以樂始而會，以道交見善而傲” (“Luming” starts the assembly with music, [the host and guests] cultivate their friendship according to propriety, and learn from what is seen as paragons of virtue.) (Ma 2001, 152; also see Zhou Fengwu 2002, 163; Wang Zhiping, 2002, 223) Alternatively Li Ling’s reading

is: “鹿鳴以樂始，而會以道交，見善而傲” (In “Luming”, [the reception] begins with music; during the meeting people interact according to propriety, and learn from what is seen as paragons of virtue.) (2002, 38) Huang Huaixin contends that these readings are syntactically flawed, and prefers “鹿鳴以樂司而會以道，交見善而學”，in which *yeyuesi* 以樂司 means using music as the main feature of the assembly. Huang’s reading of 傲 (to copy) as 學 (to learn) does not change the meaning materially (2004, 148-9). Krause renders “終乎不厭人” as “It will never cause people to loath, in the end” (2008, 51). This translation begs the question: why should the guests loath in the end, if the atmosphere has been so harmonious?

Liao Mingchun considers Confucius’ comment to be a structural analysis of the poem, by which a normative message is expounded. Liao’s reading is: “鹿鳴以樂，始而會以道，交見善而效¹¹⁸，終乎不厭人”，in which *yile* 以樂 stands for *yanle* 燕樂 (entertaining); *shi* 始 (beginning) and *zhong* 終 (end) refer to the opening and closing stanzas of the poem. According to Liao, “Luming” is about state banquets (鹿鳴燕樂), as it is noted in the first stanza: “我有旨酒、以燕樂嘉賓之心” (see translation above). The opening stanza describes the congress as an opportunity to share moral experiences (始而會以道), as this couplet testifies: “人之好我、示我周行” (The men love me, / And will show me the perfect path). Consequently “交見善而效” (in their interaction they learn from one another paragons of virtues) can be viewed as a footnote to the verse “君子是則是效” (The officers have in them a pattern and model.) (Legge 1994, 4:245) Liao glosses *yan* 厭 as gratification, where “不厭人” means 人不厭. Thus “終乎不厭人” means that the people are not satisfied, which sounds like an anti-climax to a happy gathering, as it is written in the last stanza “和樂且湛” (And our harmonious joy is long-continued). Confucius’s message has a normative subtext: though the harmonious and convivial party is enduring (和樂且湛), in the end people’s appetite for moral goodness is so great and insatiable (終乎不厭人) (Liao 2004a, 54-6). Liao’s interpretation is adopted in this translation.

¹¹⁸ *Xiao* 效 and 傲 are interchangeable. Yu Zhihui reads it as 教 but adds that it means 效 (2002, 316).

“Tuju” (兔置 Ode 7)

The graphs which Ma Chengyuan transcribes as 兔置 are not clearly shown on the bamboo slip. Whilst Ma reads them as “Tuju” 兔置 (2001, 152), He Linyi transcribes the graphs as 象蘆 which, by phonetic borrowing, can be read as 桑扈 “Sanghu”, Ode 215 of the received *Odes* (2002, 253). Whichever the poem it is, Confucius’ comment is “其用人則吾取” (I endorse the people employed [as portrayed in the poem]). He Linyi rests his case on the following verses of “Sanghu” as Confucius’ endorsement of the protagonists:

… 君子樂胥 To be rejoiced in are these princes!
萬邦之屏 They are screens to all the States.
之屏之翰 These screens, these buttresses,
百辟為憲 … All the chiefs will take them as a pattern.

(Legge 1994, 4:386-7)

On the other hand Ma Chengyuan quotes these lines form “Tuju”:


… 赳赳武夫 … That stalwart, martial man,
公侯干城… Might be shield and wall to his prince...
公侯好仇… Would be a good companion for his prince...
公侯腹心 … Might be head and heart to his prince....

(Legge 1994, 4:13-4)

Described as ‘screens and buttresses’ and ‘shields and walls’, the heroes of these two poems are the officers and defenders of the state. Most scholars agree that the poem in question is “Tuju” in view of the military service of the stalwart and martial officers (Li Ling 2002, 38; Chi and Zheng 2004, 57; and Liu Xinfang 2003, 232). However, military efficacy might not be Confucius’ sole concern. In considering this question scholars have not commented on the fact that the heroes of “Tuju” are also ‘good companions’ and the ‘head and heart’ of their prince. Perhaps this is the quality that Confucius cherishes more than just martial prowess as the criteria for employing people. On balance, “Tuju” seems to excel “Sanghu” as the poem to which Confucius refers in his comment.

The interpretation of the *Hanshi* relates this poem to King Wen appointing the worthies of Shang (Wang Qianqin 1987, 1:43). Though this is no doubt a historical reading, it does concern the appointment of worthy people and does not go across the grain of Confucius’ comment.

“[Junzi] yangyang” ([君子]陽陽 Ode 67)

Ma Chengyuan glosses  as 陽, below which is a ditto sign ‘=’, indicating that the graph should be read twice. Reading 陽 as 蕩, Ma believes that 蕩蕩 could mean any poetic piece within the “Collection of Tang” 蕩之什 of the “Daya”, but no specific poem has been nominated (2001, 155). Li Ling glosses them as 陽陽 and asserts that the poem in question is “Junzi yangyang” 君子陽陽 (Ode 67) (2002, 32). Confucius’ comment on this poem is that it concerns the *xiaoren* 小人 (petty man), which Liu Xinfang considers to be unintelligible (2003, 237). The first stanza of the poem reads:

君子陽陽	The gentleman looks full of satisfaction.
左執簧	In his left hand he holds his reed-organ,
右招我由房	And with his right he calls me to the room.
其樂只且	Oh the joy!

君子陶陶	The gentleman looks delighted.
左執翮	In his left hand he holds his screen of feathers,
右招我由教	And with his right he calls me to the stage.
其樂只且	Oh the joy!



(Legge 1994, 4:113; modified)¹¹⁹

As can be seen above the whole poem is describing a *junzi* frolicking and dallying with some actors or performers. By Confucius’ standard, frivolity and flirtation are far from being the behaviour of a *junzi* whose deportment should be graceful and serious.¹²⁰ Confucius considers the *junzi* in this case to be a misnomer, and for the protagonist’s foible he should be called a petty man. If the insertion of 君子 into the text is correct, then Confucius’s laconic critique of the persona as 小人 is a satirical subversion of the poem.

¹¹⁹ Legge’s translation of the *junzi* is “My husband”. It is felt that this poem can be read in a number of ways. The “Minor Preface” holds that this poem portrays the ministers’ call for solidarity to avoid harm whilst the sovereign was caught in insurrection (Legge 1994, 4:48). Fang Yurun considers it to be about the gentlemen entertaining themselves with performers (Fang 1986, 193-4). My translation of 君子 as ‘gentleman’ would cater for the generality of interpretation by removing the narrow, conjugal meaning of the term.

¹²⁰ *Analcets* 1.8 論語學而: “君子不重則不威” (A gentleman who lacks gravity does not inspire awe” (Lau 1992b, 4-5).

“Tuyuan” (兔爰 Ode 70)

The two graphs   (有兔 *youtu*) do not correspond to any of the poem titles of the received *Odes*. As Ma Chengyuan points out, they may be referring to Ode 70 “Tuyuan” 兔爰; 有兔 could have been taken from the first line of “Tuyuan”: “有兔爰爰” (2001, 155). Confucius’ comment “有兔 [兔爰] 不逢時” means that the poem discusses a man born into an inopportune era, which is a generally accepted interpretation supported by the following lines from the poem:

我生之初	In the early part of my life,
尚無為	Time still passed without commotion.
我生之後	In the subsequent part of it,
逢此百罹	We are meeting with all these evils....

(Legge 1994, 4:117)

“Datian” (大田 Ode 212)

Focusing on the final stanza of “Datian” (大田之卒章), Confucius comments that it is “知言而有禮” – *zhiyan* 知言 literally means ‘to know speech’, and *youli* 有禮, ‘with rites’ (Ma Chengyuan 2001, 156). “Datian” comprises four stanzas; the first three portray the planting and harvesting activities of the farming community. The final stanza depicts the sacrifice officiated by *zengsun* 曾孫 – the title of the nobleman who presides over the ceremony. Fang Yurun asserts that this poem is about the king’s royal visit to the fields at the time of harvest (1986, 438). In this stanza ritual activities are vividly described but there is no speech in the form of dialogue or monologue, not even indirect discourse. Huang Huaixin notes the absence of speech from the fourth stanza and posits that in Confucius times, the final stanza was combined with what is the third stanza of the received *Odes*. Seizing upon the verses from the then coda: “雨我公田，遂及我私” (May it rain first on our public fields, / And then come to our private), Huang considers them to be appropriately said in accordance with *li* (知言有禮) (2004, 108). That the third and fourth stanzas have been combined may well be sheer speculation, but more importantly, the natural phenomenon of rain, even altruistically wished or supplicated for, hardly concerns rites. Liao Mingchun surveys the *Zuozhuan*, the *Analects*, the *Mencius* and the *Book of Changes* before concluding that 知言 either

means words of wisdom, or the ability to analyse language for distinguishing the good from the evil and the right from the wrong (善辨是非善惡). Liao asserts that 知言 in the bamboo text refers to language proficiency, but instead of being analytical skills it is motivated by the giving of thanks for god's grace (報諸神之恩) (2003, 52).¹²¹ It could be argued that whilst the ability to discern good and evil is the wisdom behind many human traits, the act of thanks giving is more directly motivated by gratitude and reverence. In fact the entire poem is diegetic (narrated in the form of *fu*) and carries no explicit moralizing message.

In line with Zheng Xuan's interpretation of "Datian" which expands on the "Little preface", Chi and Zheng claims that this poem is a satire of the shambles and destitution during the reign of King You of Zhou. The blissful festivity, the celebration of a bumper harvest and the oblation described in the poem are reminiscences of past prosperity, as an antithesis to remonstrate against the bitter reality of the present dearth. This satirical approach, according to Chi and Zheng, is 知言, or proficient diegesis (2004, 59). Whilst this is a possible reading, it relies entirely on exophoric references and as such, it is not supported by the text of the poem.

I posit that 言 in the present context subsumes speech and non-verbal expressions. It follows that 知言 means adept in expression or communication which does not necessarily involve spoken words, particularly in expressing the notion of *li*. This position will be discussed in detail in the next chapter. For translation purposes "知言而有禮" can be rendered as: 'effective in instruction through [practicing] rites'.

"Xiaoming" (小明 Ode 152)

As the end of this slip is broken only the poem title "Xiaoming" and the graph *bu* 不 are revealed, thus nothing further can be deduced and any attempt to fill in the missing words is a matter of speculation.


¹²¹ It appears that Liao has entered into a circular argument in saying that the capability to distinguish the good from the evil etc is the cause of thanks giving, which in turn stimulates such capability.

“Bozhou” (柏舟 Ode 26) of the “Beifeng” 邶風


In a single word Confucius describes “Bozhou” of the “Beifeng” as *men* 悶 (melancholy). Ma Chengyuan considers a number of verses such as the following to be expressions of melancholy (2001, 156):

耿耿不寐 Disturbed am I and sleepless,
 如有隱憂 … As if suffering from a painful wound....
 憂心悄悄 My anxious heart is full of trouble;
 慍于群小 I am hated by the herd of mean creatures;
 覯閔既多 I meet with many distresses;
 受侮不少 … I receive insults not a few....

(Legge 1994, 4:38)

There is general agreement among commentators on Ma’s exegesis (Li Ling 2002, 33; Chi and Zheng 2004, 60). Huang Huaixin adds that the poet’s pent up anxiety has found no outlet of relief (2004, 117) and Liu Xinfang espouses the exposition of the “Little preface” that this poem laments having no opportunity to serve the court (2003, 239). Wang Zhiping reads 悶 as *min* 閔 (sorrow) focusing on the verse “覯閔既多” (2002, 225). Whilst 閔 and 悶 may be synonymous in this context, 悶 appears to be the correct reading as the Chu graph  is clearly inscribed in the forms of 門 and 心 rather than 門 and 文.

“Gufeng” (谷風 Ode 201)

Confucius’ comment “谷風忭” is obscure. Firstly there are two poems that answer to the same title “Gufeng”, Ode 35 of the “Beifeng” and Ode 201 from the “Xiaoya”. Secondly exegetical opinions differ on the reading of the graph  (忭). The various readings can be summarized as follows:

忭 read as *bei* 背 (to betray), the graph being made up of the radical 心, and *bu* 不 (no) (Ma Chengyuan 2001, 156; Chi and Zheng 2004, 61),
 as *fu* 負 (to betray) (Li Ling 2002, 33),
 as *bei* 悲 (grief) (Li Xueqin 2002b, 7),
 as *bi* 鄙 but means *chi* 恥 (disgrace), (Zhou Fengwu 2002, 163), and

as (*pi*?) 怵 (fear), the graph being made up of the radical 心 and the component *pi* 否 (Li Rui 2002, 401, Liao Mingchun 2002b, 15), and as *bei* 倍, but no explanation is provided (Wang Zhiping 2002, 225).

“Gufeng” of the “Xiaya” has been identified as the poem under discussion, as it expresses the repugnance of a divorcee, or the chagrin of a forsaken wife, particularly in these verses:

…將安將樂	… In your time of rest and pleasure,
棄予如遺	You have cast me off like an abandoned thing.
…忘我大德	… You forget my great virtues,
思我小怨	And think of my small faults.

(Legge 1994, 4:349-50)

Huang Huaixin agrees with Li Xueqin’s reading of 悲 but asserts that the poem to which the comment relates is “Gufeng” from the “Beifeng”. This poem is full of the anguish of a woman who has been abandoned by his husband; the following lines are most touching (Huang Huaixin 2004, 122):

…宴爾新昏	You feast with your new wife,
不我屑以…	And think me not worth being with…
…不念昔者	… You do not think of the former days,
伊余來墜	And are only angry with me.

(Legge 1994, 4:55-8)

In fact sentiments of betrayal or grief and to a lesser extent disgrace and fear can be felt in either poem (Chi and Zheng 2004, 61). For the purpose of this translation, the bamboo text is read as 谷風悲 – “Gufeng” expresses grief.

“Liao e” (Ode 202)

The interpretation of Confucius’ comment on “Liao e” 蓼莪 as showing filial piety (有孝志) is relatively straightforward and is well supported by consensus of opinions. As Ma Chengyuan points out, the poem laments losing the opportunity to support one’s parents; the sorrow is particularly profound in the couplet “欲報之德、昊天罔極” (If I would return [my parents’] kindness, / It is like great Heaven, illimitable.) (Legge 1994, 4:352; Ma 2001, 156) As Liao Mingchun and others point

out, a similar comment is recorded in the *Kongcongzi* (Liao 2002b, 15; Huang Huaixin 2004, 125).

“Xi you chongchu” (隰有萇楚 Ode 148)

Confucius’ comments on “this poem is that the poem expresses regret for what one processes (得而悔之也). Ma Chengyuan quotes the following verses from the poem (2001, 157):

隰有萇楚	In the low wet grounds is the carambola tree;
猗儺其枝	Soft and pliant are its branches,
天之沃沃	With the glossiness of tender beauty.
樂子之無知	I should rejoice to be like you, [O tree], without consciousness

樂子之無家	I should rejoice to be like you, [O tree], without a family....
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樂子之無室	I should rejoice to be like you, [O tree], without a household.
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(Legge 1994, 4:127)

These verses register the poet’s regret of having a family, which is, by implication, a burden to him as he admires the carambola tree of not having one. The bamboo text is relatively straightforward in this case and there is general consensus of interpretation (Liao 2002b, 15; Li Ling 2002, 33; Huang Huaixin 137; Liu Xinfang 2003, 242). Though arriving at the same conclusion, He Linyi explains the sentiment of regret by adopting the interpretation of the “Little preface”, which states that this poem is expressive of the hatred of their ruler’s lewd dissoluteness, and the longing for one without such passions (2002, 254).

“Xiangshu” (相鼠 Ode 52)





Slip 28 is broken at both ends; what remains of the first sentence is “亞而不



(慶)”. Ma Chengyuan suggests that 慶 might be the same word as *zhu* 麋 (the fawn of a deer) (2001, 158). Li Ling reads this part sentence as “惡而不憫” (a deep sense of hatred) and identifies the poem to be “Xiangshu” 相鼠 (Ode 52) (2002, 32). Liu Xinfang reads 慶 as *qie* 且 without providing further explanation (2003, 252). Huang Huaixin concurs with Li (2004, 128) and so does Liao Mingchun (2002b, 15).

“Xiangshu” is a poem that reproaches uncivil people, as it is said in the line: “人而無儀、不死何為” (If a man have (sic) no dignity of demeanour, / What should he but die?) (Legge 1994, 4:84) Indeed the animosity is so intense that the anathema is condemned to die. Liao Mingchun’s suggestion of inserting ‘相鼠言’ before “惡而不憫” is adopted in this translation.

“Qiang youci” (牆有茨 Ode 46)

In his transcription Ma Chengyuan did not identify the title    (牆又薺) with any poem within the received *Shijing*. He examines the bamboo text “慎密而不知言” with reference to the adage from “Pin yi” of the *Liji* 禮記·聘義: “縝密而栗，知也” (fine, compact, and strong - [as is a piece of jade] like intelligence) (Legge 1993, 2:464) without relating it to the context of any poem (2001, 158). Li Ling asserts that Ma has misread  which should have been the Chu graph for 牆 and that 又薺 by phonetic loan should be read as 有茨, thence the poem “Qiang youci”. Li further affirms that “慎密而不知言” refers to the verses “中冓之言，不可道也” (The story of the inner chamber, / Cannot be told.) (Legge 1994, 4:74; Li 2002, 32) Li implies that this poem is about secrecy intimately exchanged that should not be divulged.

As far as other scholarly opinions are concerned there is general consensus of the poem being “Qiang youci” and that it involves secretive conversations, but the reading of the poem differs. Chi and Zheng follow the interpretations of the “Little preface” and Zheng Xuan that the secret mentioned in this poem concerns the scandals of incest in the Wei court during the reign of Duke Xuan of Wei (衛宣公 circa 680 BCE) (2004, 64). Liao Mingchun concludes from the verses “不可道也…不可詳也…不可讀也” ([the topic] cannot be told… cannot be particularly related…cannot be recited) that “不知言” means not knowing, or having lost the guiding principles of telling [the truth] (2002, 272). Liu Xinfang adopts Liao’s view, in that “不知言” means hesitant speech (2003, 254). Hu Pingsheng rejects the interpretation of the “Little preface” and prefers to read “縝密而不知言” as the discussion (without specifying what it is) that is so secretive that the content cannot be understood (2002, 278). Huang Huaixin glosses *zhonggou* 中冓 as ‘middle of the




night’ rather than ‘the inner chamber of the palace’, and proposes to read the poem as portraying the husband and wife mutually pledging not to divulge the topic of their conversation after their intimate congress deep in the night (2004, 273).

On closer reading, the verse “不可道也” followed by the lines “所可道也、言之醜也” (What would have to be told, / Would be the vilest of recitals) (Legge 1994, 4:74) and the parallel constructions in the second and third stanzas suggest that the tête-à-tête, whatever the subject may be, is well understood in terms of what has been said, only that it would be too scandalous to be related to third parties. The bamboo text is thus translated along these lines.

“Qingying” (青蠅 Ode 219)

As mentioned earlier slip 28 is broken at both ends, what can be read as “青蠅知” may well be an incomplete sentence. The adopted slip sequence with slip 29 following 28 is but one of the several options which most scholars have proposed. If the adopted arrangement is correct, then should “青蠅知” be read without punctuation with “惓而不知人”, or should they be treated as separate sentences? The alternative slip arrangements do not present the same problem, for example “青蠅知…” is followed by “[君子]陽陽…” on slip 25 (Li Ling 2002, 31-2), or 東方未明 of slip 17 (Liao 2002b, 15), or “…忠，邶柏舟悶” (Fan Yuzhou 2002, 183), in which cases the textual flow is clearly not a continuum.

On closer examination, slips 28 shows, after the character 知, a blank space of nearly 1 cm before the jagged edge of the breakage, which cannot be said with certainty to be a best fit for the jagged edge of slip 29, as proof of their being one piece. Despite this, this slip sequence is the most popular choice among commentators. Hang Huaixin suggests to insert the word *chan* 讒 (slander) after 知 so that the sentence reads 青蠅知讒. The reconstructed sentence means “Qingying” is about seeing through slanders, which accords with the theme of the poem (2004, 131). For the purpose of this translation it is assumed that the two slips should be read as one, but in view of the fact that there could still be missing characters between the two sections, it would be futile to speculate on the meaning of “青蠅知…” except to translate it as “‘Qingying’ is about knowing …’

The graphs   on slip 29 have been transcribed as 卷而 which, according to Ma Chengyuan, stand for the poem “Juan er” 卷耳 (Ode 3) by phonetic loan transfer (Ma 2001, 159). Instead of treating these two graphs as a poem title, Zhou Fengwu and others’ reading is 患而不知人 (literally, grievance but not knowing people) (2002, 156). Zhou provides no further explanation of his reading. Liu Xinfang admits that reading the graphs as 卷耳 cannot be confirmed one way or another (2003, 256). As Chi and Zheng have observed,  is the same graph appearing on slip 4 and has been glossed as 患 (2004, 65).

Over the years the interpretation of “Juan er” has been controversial. The “Minor Preface” puts it down as a poem describing the queen recruiting talented people for the King (Legge 1994, 4:37]), a reading which has been rejected by the Song scholar Ouyang Xiu. Yao Jiheng propounds that it is about King Wen seeking virtuous ministers (1838, 14). Fang Yurun asserts that it portrays a woman’s steadfast love in longing for her wandering husband’s return (1986, 77). Modern interpretations advanced by Wen Yiduo, Ye Shuxian and many others argue that it is a love song rich in symbolic meaning. It is indeed a poem of complex structure, possibly with different focalizations and unique diegetic styles, setting it apart from the other poems of the *Shijing*. Ma Chengyuan’s reading of the comment “卷耳不智人” is explained in terms of the poet’s sigh when his horse and servant become ill and rachitic during his journey, an explanation that is in itself rather obscure. Ma’s explication of 不智人 becomes 不智於人 (2001, 159) which has unfortunately clouded the meaning even more. Li Ling proposes to read 智 as 知 and that “卷耳不知人” means that the poem laments one’s inability of uniting with one’s beloved (2002, 30), a view that is shared by Liao Mingchun who adds that 不知人 denotes that one does not know the lover’s whereabouts (2002b, 137). Hu Pingsheng regards 不知人 means the servant is not appreciative of the hardship of his master (2002, 287). Huang Huaixin considers that these explanations have missed the point of the poem and asserts that 不知人 tells of a wife’s lack of sympathetic understanding of her husband’s delayed home-coming (2004, 130).

It would appear that none of the exegeses on 不知人 mentioned above have satisfactorily explained the poetic meaning of “Juan er”, and there is no particularly

strong justification to read 卷而 as the poem 卷耳. For this reason the text is read as “患而不知人” for the purpose of translation.

“Sheqin” [“Qianchang”] (褰裳 Ode 87) and others

The remaining text 涉秦刀 幽律而士角 幡婦 ■ 河水 智 on slip 29 are read differently by scholars. Ma Chengyuan’s transcription results in four poem titles not found in the received text, namely “Sheqin” 涉秦, “Luer” 律而, “Jiao ?” 角幡, “Heshui” 河水. Ma asserts that “Sheqin” was the old title for “Qianchang” 褰裳 (Ode 87) of the received text (2001, 159), the first stanza of which reads:

子惠思我	If you, Sir, think kindly of me,
褰裳涉溱	will hold up my lower garments, and cross the Zhen
子不我思	If you do not think of me,
豈無他人	Is there no other person [to do so]?
狂童之狂也且	Impudent as you are, you impudent fellow!

(Legge 1994, 4:140; modified)

Liao Mingchun points out that 絕 refers to the couplet “子不我思，豈無他人” but advances no further explanation. By implication, these two verses speak of the resolute mindset as the rupture in friendship or romance seems to be beyond repair.

“Heshui” 河水 is known to have been lost in transmission as the title appears in the *Guoyu*, being the poem recited by Prince Chonger (Ma Chengyuan 2001, 159). On the other hand “Heshui” could mean the poems “Xintai” 新臺 Ode 43 (Xu Quansheng 2002, 370) or “Fatan” 伐檀 Ode 112 (Liao Mingchun 2002, 270). However, Xu provides no justification for reading “Xintai” in relation to the key word *zhi* 智 (intelligence); in fact the poem is a burlesque of a girl wishing to conjoin herself to Prince Charming but was married to an old hunchback.¹²² On the other hand “Fatan” tells of the *junzi*, not sowing or hunting, but reaping the benefit of other people’s labour.¹²³ This Poem can be read either way as a lampoon of, or panegyric on, the *junzi*. Liao Mingchun argues for the latter and asserts that the *junzi*’s

¹²² As in these verses: “燕婉之求、得此戚施” (A pleasant, genial mate she sought, / And she has got this hunchback.) (Legge 1994, 4:70)

¹²³ As in these verses: “不狩不獵…不稼不穡…彼君子兮、不素餐兮” (You sow not nor reap; - / You do not follow the chase; - / O that superior man! / He would not eat the bread of idleness.) (Legge 1994, 4:170)

intelligence is exactly the exercising of his mind ruling the people instead of working in the fields (2002, 270-1). No matter how this poem is to be read, the avocation of parasitism as intelligence would seem debatable.

Li Ling disagrees with Ma's reading of 律 as *lu* 律 and suggests that it is the word 柎, and *fuer* 柎而 is almost homophonic with the poem title "Fuyi" 芣苢 (Ode 8). Li adds that "Fuyi" has been traditionally regarded as a woman's lamentation of her husband's (that is, *shi* 士) illness. However, the poem is a lyrical diegesis of plant gathering and there is no mention of any ill husband or 士.¹²⁴ On the other hand, Li claims, the non-extant poem 角幡 is about women (婦) (Li 2002, 31). He Linyi comes to the same conclusion with Li on reading 柎而 as 芣苢 but reads 幡 as *guan* 𦵏 (tufts of hair) which can be found in the lines of Ode 102 "Futian" 甫田 of the "Qifeng" 齊風: "婉兮孌兮、總角𦵏兮" (How young and tender, / Is the child with his two tufts of hair) (Legge 1994, 4:158), hence He's reading of 角𦵏婦. He notes that "Fuyi" does not portray 士 and "Futian" does not portray 婦, and proposes to rectify the anomaly, possibly caused by copying error, by reading 芣苢婦, 角𦵏士. He adds that "Fuyi" is about women picking herbs of fertility and 角𦵏 is about women admiring boys (He 2002, 256-7). However, the assumption of erroneous inscription is yet to be substantiated. Whilst 芣苢 is a poem title, 角𦵏 is not, which puts the rhetorical pattern off balance. Furthermore the motif of 角𦵏 is not the central theme of "Futian" and is unlikely to be a substitute for the established title.

Liao Mingchun asserts that 幡 should be read as 枕 by reason of variations of its philological construction. The term 角枕 appears in the poem "Gusheng" 葛生 Ode124:

角枕粲兮	How beautiful was the pillow of horn,
錦衾爛兮	How splendid was the embroidered coverlet!
予美亡此	The man of my admiration is no more here;
誰與獨旦	With whom can I dwell? - Alone [I wait for] the morning.

(Legge 1994, 4:186)

¹²⁴ Li has not quoted the source of this traditional reading but it has been cited by Wang Xianqian: "詩人傷其君子有惡疾" (Wang 1987, 47). The poem comprises variations of the verses "采采芣苢，薄言采之" (We gather and gather the plantains; / Now we may gather them) (Legge 1984, 4:14) throughout its three stanzas which, literally, do not lend itself to sententious interpretations.

Liao posits that 角枕 was the old title of “Gusheng”. This poem describes a wife’s longing for her husband, thus the comment “角枕婦” (2002, 270). Wei Yihui and others subscribe to Liao’s reading (Wei 2002, 392; Wang Zhiping 2002, 226; Huang Huaixin, 2004, 143; Chi and Zheng 2002, 67).

Zhou Fengwu reads 涉秦 as the old title for the poem now known as “Qianchang” but not reading 律而 and 角幡 as poem titles. He reads *jue* 絕 as *ji* 繼 (continue)¹²⁵, 律 as *si* 肆 (impudence), and 幡 as *yan* 艷 (glamorous), whereas 士 stands for *shi* 事 (affair) and *jiao* 角, competition. As can be seen above “Qianchang” is about a girl cautioning an impudent courter and boasting about having other wooers in contention for her favour. Zhou explains 繼肆 in terms of Confucius’ adage “古之狂也肆，今之狂也蕩”.¹²⁶ In so doing he imputes the arbitrary temporal frame of reference of antiquity (古) and contemporariness (今) into the term to produce the meaning of ‘continuing impudence’ (2002, 164-5). Hence Zhou’s reading of 涉秦繼肆而士，角艷婦 means: “Sheqin” is about continuing impudence and competition for the favour of glamorous women. Not only is this explanation unnecessarily circuitous; the reading of the girl as glamorous (艷) is clearly over reading, as neither of these notions can find support within the poem. Liao Mingchun follows Xu Quansheng’s explication that 律而 is in fact the poem “Zhe” 著 (Ode 98) of the “Qifeng” 齊風 as the poem is about a bridegroom, who can be referred to as *shi* 士 (Liao 2002b, 14).

In summation, this passage can be read in a number of ways but on the balance of textual evidence, this reading is adopted: “涉秦 [褰裳] 其絕，著而士。角枕 [葛生] 婦。河水智”，which can be rendered as: “‘Sheqin’ [‘Qianchang’] shows determination; ‘Zhe’ is about a bridegroom; ‘Jiaozhen’ [‘Gesheng’] speaks of a woman [longing for her husband]. ‘Heshui’ tells of intelligence...’

¹²⁵ Zhou’s exegesis is consistent with his reading of the same word appearing on slip 27.

¹²⁶ *Analects* 17.16 論語·陽貨: “In antiquity, in being wild, men were impatient of restraint; today, in being wild, they simply deviate from the right path” (D. C. Lau 1992b, 176-7)

“[Wu] jiang dache” ([無]將大車 Ode 206)

Ma Chengyuan identifies 贊大車 as the poem “Wujiang dache” 無將大車 (Ode 206) of the extant *Shijing*. This poem is said to be 𦨇 which has been glossed as *xiao* 𦨇, but Ma is silent on the meaning of this polysemic word (2001, 150). Chi and Zheng point out that the *Guangyun* 廣韻 defines 𦨇 as *xuan* 喧 (clamour), which refers to the outburst of slanders defaming the righteous, a traditional line propounded in the “Little preface” and extended by Zheng Xian (2002, 68) as the theme of “Wujiang dache”. The poem comprises three similarly constructed stanzas, the first of which reads:

無將大車	Do not push forward a wagon; -
祇自塵兮	You will only raise the dust about yourself.
無思百憂	Do not think of all your anxieties;
祇自疢兮	You will only make yourself ill.

(Legge 1994, 4:362)

Huang Huaixin regards this ‘clamour’ to be the counsel given to the poet not to push the wagon and not to think of his anxieties. This advice appears six times in the poem, thus Huang considers the situation ‘noisy’ but despite its frequency, it is of no practical help to the poet (Huang 2004, 196). Liu Xinfang reads 𦨇 as a reference to the word *wu* 無, the wagon driver’s noise. In so doing Liu revives the debate on whether 無 is a meaningless function word, or a word denoting ‘not to’. Predicated on the fact that the bamboo text does not include the word 無 in the title, Liu argues for reading it as an onomatopoeic utterance of the wagon driver (Liu 2003, 218). However, Liu’s reading does not explain why the wagon driver felt helpless.

Wang Zhiping glosses 𦨇 as *ao* 𦨇 and adopts the definition of the *Shuowen jiezi* as ‘wicked people’. Accordingly by implication, “[無]將大車之𦨇也，則以為不可如何也” means that the worthies are feeling helpless having to work along wicked colleagues, an interpretation that Zheng Xian propounds (Wang 2002, 222). Fang Yurun argues that there is no mention of any “great officer [expressing] any regret of having recommended mean men to employment” as the “Little preface” has suggested (Legge 1994, 4:69]), and observes that the poet is self-consoling, feeling powerless over prevailing adversities (Fang 1897, 426). Quoting from the *Er Ya* 爾雅, Liao Mingchun glosses 𦨇 as *xian* 閑 (languor) (Liao 2002b, 16). Li Rui notes from

the *Mencius* 8.A.9 that 鷺 means ‘content’: “人知之亦鷺鷺，人不知亦鷺鷺” (You should be content whether your worth is recognized by others or not) (D.C. Lau 2003, 188-9), thus by extension, 鷺 connotes ‘feeling at ease’. Li further observes that the banishment of anxieties is feigned optimism whilst in reality, as Confucius has pointed out, the true feeling is helplessness (不可如何) (Li 2008, 256). In the *Xunzi* 27.98 the verses from this poem “無將大車、維塵冥冥” have been quoted, by which Xunzi glosses them to mean that “one should not live among ordinary men” (Knoblock 1988, 3: 232). If having to keep company with ordinary men is something a *junzi* feels helpless, then Liao and Li’s reading is considered to be well supported and is adopted as the interpretation in this translation: ‘the notion of feeling at ease as expressed in “[Wu] jiang dache” is in fact a feeling of helplessness.’

“Zhanlu” (湛露 Ode 174)

The bamboo commentary of “Zhanlu” hangs on two key words, 嗑 (𩚑) and 𩚑 (𩚑). Ma Chengyuan reads them as *yi* 嗑 and *tuo* 𩚑 respectively. Leaving 嗑 unexplained as it does not appear as an entry in the *Shuowen jiezi*, Ma observes that 𩚑 means a speeding carriage, but by phonetic loan it should be read as 酩 (flush from inebriation) (2001, 150). However this does not appear to be the central theme of the poem, rather it is the praise of the virtue and deportment of the partakers during the carousal, as it is written:

湛湛露斯	Heavy lies the dew;
匪陽不晞	Nothing but the sun can dry it.
厭厭夜飲	Happily and long into the night we drink; -
不醉無歸...	Till all are drunk, there is no retiring....
...顯允君子	Distinguished and true are my noble guests,
...莫不令德	Every one of excellent virtue.
...莫不令儀	Every one of them of excellent deportment.

(Legge 1994, 4:276)

Zhou Fengwu reads 𩚑 as 益 (betterment) and 𩚑 as 馳 (speedy) in view of the fact that although the poem starts with drinking, it quickly moves on to issues of virtue and deportment (2002, 163). Liao Mingchun and Chi and Zheng share the same view, but Chi prefers to read 𩚑 as 𩚑 which is synonymous with 馳 (Liao 2002b, 16; Chi and Zheng 2004, 68). Liu Xinfang reads 益 as the son of Heaven’s

rite of entertaining the feudatories and 馳 as their services pledged in reciprocation. Li Rui asserts that the betterment mentioned in “Zhanlu” lies in drinking without being intoxicated, thus reading 乾 as 酤 is against the grain of the poem (2008, 257). Huang Huaixin reads 溢 as *yi* 溢 (praise) and 馱 as *tuo* 馱 (carry), claiming that the praise of the good virtue and deportment of the guests alludes to pampering them (2004, 199). It appears that the linguistic context of the poem does not concern betterment of virtue but is quick to praise the virtue and deportment of the guests. Thus, my reading is “湛露之溢也，其猷乾歟”，translated as: ‘The praise in “Zhanlu” is uttered without hesitation’.

5. The *Feng* 風, *Ya* 雅 and *Song* 頌 Poems

Shangbo Transcription:

孔=曰甸丘虔善之於差虔憲之巨黜虔信之■文王虔荒之清【21 part】之甸丘曰甸又情而亡望虔善之於差曰四矢夏呂御躡虔憲之■巨黜曰丌義一氏心女結也虔信之文王王才上於邵于天虔荒之【22】多士秉旻之惠虔敬之刺旻曰乍競佳人不曷佳惠於虐前王不忘虔斂之昊=又城命二后受之貴獻曷矣訟【6】

My Reading:

孔子曰：宛丘吾善之。猗嗟吾喜之。鴈鳩吾信之。文王吾美之。清廟【21 part】吾敬之。宛丘曰：洵有情，而無妄，吾善之。猗嗟曰：四矢反，以御亂，吾喜之。鴈鳩曰：其儀一氏，心如結也，吾信之。文王曰：文王在上，於昭于天，吾美之【22】清廟曰：濟濟多士，秉文之德，吾敬之。烈文曰：乍競唯人，丕顯唯德。於呼！前王不忘，吾悅之。昊天有成命，二后受之，貴且顯矣。頌…【6】

Translation:

Confucius said, “I endorse the goodness of “Wanqiu”. I find delight in “Yijie”. I consider “Shijiu” credible. I find “Wenwang” praiseworthy, and “Qingmiao”【21】

respectable. It is said in “**Wanqiu**”, “Believing in sincerity, and not playing trickery”, I commend it. “**Yijie**” says, “The four [arrows] all hit the same [target]! One [is] able to withstand rebellion!” I find this delightful. “**Shijiu**” says, “[The junzi] is truthful to one partner, / His heart is as if it were tied to what is correct.” I find this credible. “**Wenwang**” says, “King Wan is on high; / Oh! Bright is he in heaven”, I praise it. **【22】** [“**Qingmiao**” says, “Great was] the number of the officers: / [All] assiduous followers of the virtue of king Wan”, I respect it. “Liewen” says, “What is most powerful is the being the man; / What is most distinguished is being virtuous; / Ah! the former kings are not forgotten!” I take joy in it. “Heaven made its determinate appointment, / Which [our] two sovereigns received”; it is august and venerable. The “Song”.... **【6】**

Annotation:

The poems discussed on this slip are taken from the “Feng”, the “Daya” and the “Song” divisions. The context suggests that “Qingmiao” 清廟 (Ode 266) is the title missing from the broken slip 21.

“Wanqiu” (宛丘 Ode 136)

Confucius’ comment on “Wanqiu” is as follows:

宛丘吾善之。
宛丘曰：洵有情，而無望，吾善之。

Confucius endorses “Wanqiu” as a good poem possibly because of the third and fourth verses on which he is focusing:

子之湯兮	How gay and dissipated you are,
宛丘之上兮	There on the top of Wanqiu!
洵有情兮	You are full of kindly affection indeed,
而無望兮	But you have nothing to make you looked up to!
坎其擊鼓	How your blows on the drum resound,
宛丘之下	At the foot of Wanqiu!
無冬無夏	Be it winter, be it summer,
值其鷺羽	You are holding your egret's feather!

(Legge 1994, 4:205)

The third (final) stanza is similarly worded as the second. In the light of Confucius’ comment, Legge’s translation has been thrown into doubt.

Ma Chengyuan and Li Ling both identify the poem as “Wanqiu”, pointing out that the graph 宛 (宛) here is different to 宛 appearing as 宛 on slip 8 as the poem title “Xiaowan” 小宛 (Ma 2001, 151; Li 2002, 39; also see He Linyi 2002, 253). According to Jiang Guanghui, *xun* 洵 means ‘truly’, and 宛丘 is a stage (similar to the orchestra of a Greek amphitheatre) surrounded by higher grounds on four sides and is where ritual dances and prayers for rain were performed.¹²⁷ As it is written in the *Zhouli*, Jiang asserts that 望 refers to sacrificial ceremonies: *wangsi* 望祀 involves the oblation of animals and grains, and *wangyan* 望衍, the sacrificial offering of monies. Thus “洵有情而無望” means true sincerity in ritual performances, even no oblation is offered is what Confucius endorses to be good (2002a).

Chi and Zheng note that the “Little preface” has glossed this poem as a satire on the wantonness and dissipation of Duke You of Chen 陳幽公 (circa 850 BCE). However, in reading the commentary and the poem, Chi is not convinced that the poem evinces any sense of goodness (善) as Confucius has asserted (2004, 70).¹²⁸ Fang Yurun adopts a similar interpretation in that the poem depicts the ruler and his ministers dropping below their dignity to be vagabond-like, revelling in songs and dances all year round (1986, 281). Liao Mingchun considers “Wanqiu” to be a panegyric love song rather than a derogatory satire as the “Little preface” has suggested (2002b, 12). Chao Fulin asserts that it is a love song between a man and a priestess whose romance (洵有情) has overstepped the bounds of propriety and social mores, dashing any hopes of matrimony (而無望) (2006a, 55). Huang Huaixin propounds a similar interpretation to Chao’s (2004, 203).

Wang Zhiping subscribes to the exposition of “洵有情而無望” by Zheng Xuan, who reads 洵 as *xin* 信 (to believe), and notes that the persona of the poem *zi* 子 believes as true facts the wantonness and dissipation occurring in his time, resulting in having no deportment of eminence to look up to as edifying examples (2002, 223).¹²⁹ However, it is felt that this notion is, at best, moral passivity which may not necessarily be worthy of Confucius’ endorsement as ‘good’. Li Xueqin

¹²⁷ Li’s description may not be correct in view of the verses “宛丘之上” and “宛丘之下”, suggesting *wanqiu* was higher than its surroundings.

¹²⁸ In the words of the “Little preface”: “宛丘，刺幽公也，淫荒昏亂，遊蕩無度焉。”

¹²⁹ In Zheng Xian’s words: “此君信有荒淫之情，其威儀無可觀望而則效。”

reads 情 as *cheng* 誠 (sincerity) and *wuwang* 無望 as the homophone of 無妄 (no trickery) (2005, 284). To Confucius, the importance of this poem is the faith shown in the priest-musician’s sincerity and truthfulness by way of his/her dedication to performing his/her duties, no matter what instrument he/she is to play, what feather he/she is to hold, or where he/she is playing, as if oblivious of the changing of the seasons and the environment. This is believed to be what Confucius endorses as the goodness of the poem.

Xue Yuanze 薛元澤(2012) argues that “Wanqiu” is a poem praising Daji 大姬, the daughter of King Wu, for her enthusiasm as a priestess in presiding over sacrificial rites. Xue glosses 洵 as sincerity, 望 as rituals, but reads *wu* 無 in its original script *wang* 亡, with 亡望 denoting the completion of the ritual ceremonies. Likewise the verses 無冬無夏 should be read as 亡冬亡夏, meaning at the end of winter and summer. Xue argues that the persona 子 in the first stanza refers to Daji, who conducts the ceremony on the top of the *wanqiu* by holding a feather, whereas the other priest-musicians are performing below. Xue argues that what Confucius endorses as good is Daji’s sincerity and enthusiasm (洵有情) in accomplishing sacrificial ceremonies (而無望), at the conclusion of the seasons.

In translating this segment of the bamboo text there is no need to relate “Wanqiu” to Daji. Whether the persona(e) in the poem is/are a priest, priestess or ordinary lovers, the central theme of sincerity and dedication is what Confucius endorses to be good.

“Yijie” (猗嗟 Ode 106)

Confucius has this to say about “Yijie”:

猗嗟吾喜之。
猗嗟曰：四矢反，以御亂，吾喜之。


“Yijie” is a poem that praises archery and the archer, in whom Confucius is well pleased. Confucius’s comment is taken from the third (final) stanza:

猗嗟變兮	Alas for him, so beautiful!
清揚婉兮	His bright eyes and high forehead how lovely!
舞則選兮	His dancing so choice!
射則貫兮	Sure to send his arrows right through!
四矢反兮	The four all going to the same place!

以禦亂兮

One able to withstand rebellion!

(Legge 1994, 4:162)

Fang Yurun notes that this poem extols the artistry and physical bearing of Duke Zhuang of Lu 魯莊公 (circa 670 BCE) (1986, 240). The “Little preface” glosses this poem to be a satire on his inability to restrain his mother from incestuousness, despite his dignified demeanour and artistry (Legge 1994, 4:53). Ma glosses  as *bian* 變 (change) (2001, 152) whilst the received text reads *fan* 反 (return). Chi and Zheng point out that 四矢變 is the *Hanshi* version whilst 四矢反 is the *Maoshi* version, each referring to different rules of the archery game. In a nutshell the former is to shoot at different targets whilst the latter is to shoot at the same target set by the first arrow (2004, 73-4). As Ma Chengyuan points out, Confucius only focuses on the last two verses (2001, 152). It appears that Confucius does not concern himself with the persona of the poem, or with its genre as a laud or satire, but the more noble issue of defending one’s state.

“Shijiu” (鴉鳩 Ode 152)

On “Shijiu” Confucius’ comment is as follows:

鴉鳩吾信之。

鴉鳩曰：其儀一氏，心如結也，吾信之。

Confucius’ comment is drawn from the last two verses of the first stanza:

鴉鳩在桑	The turtle dove is in the mulberry tree,
其子七兮	And her young ones are seven.
淑人君子	The virtuous man, the princely one,
其儀一兮	Is uniformly correct in his deportment.
其儀一兮	He is uniformly correct in his deportment,
心如結兮	His heart is as if it were tied to what is correct.

(Legge 1994, 4:222).

Liao Mingchun suggests that *shi* 氏 can be read as *zhi* 只 (a function word with no meaning) (2002b, 17). Most commentators consider *yi* 儀 to be ‘deportment’, taking this poem as praising the virtuous man who is true to form, without dissemblance or deception (Huang Huixin 2004, 210). However, Wen Yiduo notes that Zheng Xuan has glossed 儀 as 匹 *pi* (mate) in the verse “實為我儀” (He was

my mate) of “Baizhou” of the “Yongfeng” 邶風, thus 儀 in “其儀一氏” should likewise mean “partner” (2004, 292). Reading 儀 as mate or partner is more convincing as it is a parallel to 子 (offspring). Thus Confucius’ comment can be translated as: “‘Shijiu’ says, ‘[The *junzi*] is truthful to one partner, / His heart is as if it were tied to what is correct. This is credible.’”

“Wenwang” (文王 Ode 235) and “Qingmiao” (清廟 Ode 266)

Slip 22 is broken at one-third of the length towards the end and two graphs have been inserted with reasonable certainty by scholars: “文王[]：[]王在上，於昭于天，吾美之”。 Similarly, graphs can be inserted at the broken tip of slip 6 to read “[][][]曰：[][]多士，秉文之德，吾敬之”。 Here Confucius quotes directly from two poems, “Wenwang” from the “Daya” and “Qingmiao” from the “Song” divisions. Confucius praises these two verses from “Wenwang”: “King Wen is on high; / Oh! bright is he in heaven.” He also praises people who follow virtuous examples as it is written in “Qingmiao”: “Great was the number of the officers: / [All] assiduous followers of the virtue of [king] Wen.” (Legge 1994, 4:428, 569) Also from the “Song” Confucius quotes from “Liemen”: “乍競唯人，丕顯唯德…前王不忘” (What is most powerful is the being the man; / What is most distinguished is being virtuous; / Ah! the former kings are not forgotten!) in which Confucius finds delight. From “Haotian you chengming” 昊天有成命 (Ode 271) Confucius pays special attention to the nobility of King Wen and King Wu as depicted in the couplet: “二后受之，貴且顯矣” (Heaven made its determinate appointment, / Which [our] two sovereigns received.) (Legge 1994, 4:572 and 575)

6. Postscript

Through reading “Kongai shilun” and the poems synoptically one could appreciate that the manuscript author has explained the majority of the poems in term of *qing*. The understanding of the manuscript and the poems gained from this textual study will facilitate the critical review in the next phase of this project. During this process, a few Chu graphs, such as 寺 appearing on slip 2 and slip 10, and the graph 舉 on slip 20 are found to have been unsatisfactorily glossed previously causing

semantic problems. My research reveals that they may be glossed differently from the mainstream philological opinions as discussed above. There are other graphs or phrases which have not been resolved satisfactorily, such as “患而” or “卷耳”, “著而士”, “角枕”, which may be the subjects of further research.

A complete version of the transcription and translation can be found at the end of Part A. Images of individual bamboo slips showing the inscription, the transcribed texts and the translation are shown in Appendix A. Whilst this part has focused on uncovering the meaning of the commentary in relation to the poems, Part C will reflect on the implicit meaning of the more complex poems and explore the didacticism of *qing* presented in the manuscript in relation to the commentarial tradition.

Part C CRITICAL REVIEW

Chapter 4 Poetic Implicitness

Poetry lives not only by gloss and
orthodox explanation, it lives also by
tacit presumption, by implicit ways of
knowing, by unstated anxieties.

– Stephen Owen
Traditional Chinese Poetry and Poetics

This research has thus far inquired into the poetic and commentarial traditions of the *Book of Odes*, the codicological issues and the text of “Kongzi shilun”. The translation of the manuscript into English was based on copious exegetical works whose occasional inadequacies have been supplemented by views of my own. The odes cited in the previous chapter have been interpreted according to the commentaries of the manuscript, but the spectrum of poetic meaning, obscured by their dense metaphors which are often embedded in terse language, deserves further discussion. However, a detailed explication of all the odes mentioned in the manuscript would fill volumes of writing, an exercise that is beyond the purview of this project. Given that some odes are more complex than the others in form or

content, or both, it is proposed to re-visit some of them in this chapter. They are selected on the basis that they will demonstrate how the poetry and commentary interact for the production of meaning, which will in turn facilitate the critical review of the manuscript in the next chapter. It is my claim that the notions of *qing* and *li* are the thematic components of these poems. This is also an attempt to answer the question raised in Part A of this thesis: what, if any, new light does “Kongzi shilun” shed on the *Odes*, and could our current understanding of the *Odes* be confirmed or enhanced? To this end the ensuing discussion will endeavour to reveal the innermost dynamic residing behind the poetry, beyond the explicit or literal, as elucidated in, or perhaps inspired by, the manuscript.

1. “Yanyan” 燕燕

Confucius’ comment on this poem is that it expresses devout and sincere love (燕燕之情以其獨也). Li Xueqin and Chao Fulin suggest that the fourth stanza of “Yanyan” could have belonged to another poem (Chao 2003b, 18). Despite this, in a separate paper (2004) Chao maintains his historical reading in line with the “Little preface” which is about Zhuang Jiang 莊姜 and Daigui 戴嬀, whose story has been outlined in the last chapter. He further expands on the details of their journey in line with the concept of *shendu* 慎獨 as elucidated in the excavated texts of “Mawangdui Wuxing and Commentary” 馬王堆五行說, in which a couplet from “Yanyan” has been quoted.

Chao claims that Daigui conspired with Zhuang Jiang to overthrow Zhouyu 州吁 the usurper. As a first step she was to return to her native state of Chen 陳 to find help there. The imageries of the swallows point to Zhuang Jiang escorting Daigui on that trip. Chao asserts that the verse “差池其羽” means the swallow extending its wings and tail; “頡之頡之” means the swallow stretching its head, both describing the swallow’s swift flight. The verse “下上其音” refers to the secretive discussions between Zhuang Jiang and Daigui about their plan (2004, 124-5). Whilst this dramatic interpretation of intimacy may be stretched to mean a kind of devout love or sincerity as Confucius has expounded, the attribution of a historical event such as this to the poem lacks endophoric evidence.

The idea of 慎獨 as it appears in “Wuxing” reads (2004, 126):¹³⁰

燕燕于飛，差池其羽 …其言相送，誨也。方其化，不在其羽矣 …
能差池其羽，然後能致遠，言至也。差池者言不在衰經，不在衰經
也然後能至哀。夫喪，正經修領而哀殺矣。言其至內者之不在外
也，是之謂獨，獨也者，舍體也。君子慎其獨也。

“The swallows are flying together. Their feathers are uneven …” This speaks of discussing their plan when one is seeing the other off. In mourning, one’s attention is not on the order of the feathers. Only when one is able to ‘disorder one’s feathers’ may one advance afar. This is the point. “Disorder” refers to paying no attention to one’s worn hemp mourning sash. If one does not pay attention to one’s hemp mourning sash, only then may one culminate in grief. Now, if one adjusts one’s hemp mourning sash and fixes one’s collar at a funeral, then one stifles grief. This points to the fact that the culmination of one’s interior (state) is to not pay attention to one’s exterior (state). This is what is called ‘single-mindedness’. Single-mindedness means the transcendence of corporeal forms. The *junzi* is conscious of such single-mindedness. (My translation, modified after consulting Csikszentmihalyi 2004, 320-3; Liang Tao 2005).

A close reading of the “Wuxing” reveals that it stops short of ascribing the poem to Zhuang Jiang and Daigui, despite this Chao anchors his interpretation on the two ladies who were still in mourning on the journey (2004, 127). Chao summarizes the ideology of 慎獨 as a concept of self-critique, self-sufficiency and truthfulness to oneself, or a notion of broadening one’s inner consciousness in public or in solitude (2004, 125). More to the point is Liang Tao’s delineation of 獨 as single-mindedness and not physical solitude (2005). Chao notes that the graph *hui* 誨 (instruct) in fact appears as *hai* 海 (sea) on the silk manuscript (and adopted as such by Csikszentmihalyi) but he prefers to read it as 誨 (2004, 126), which could be Chao’s tendentious reading to justify Jiang and Dai’s conference on the way. As Jeffrey Riegel points out, the passage invokes the folklore metaphor of a swallow accompanying another on its macabre flight (the phrase “方其化” in which *hua* 化 (transforms) euphemistically stands for ‘dies’) to the sea. Riegel summarizes the “Wuxing” ideology of “君子慎其獨也” as “the superior man heeds his own thoughts and not the world around him” (1997, 160). In this regard Liao Mingchun’s reading

¹³⁰ In Chao’s text there is a missing character after 衰 and the character 經 has been inserted after consulting other sources. The “Wuxing” manuscript is not by any means a stable text; the original script *yuan* 遠 in the sentence 能差池其羽然後能致遠 is the same for (or very similar to) *ai* 哀 (sorrow), *shui* 衰 (feeble)... thus several transcriptions and interpretations can be generated. Chao Fulin’s reading in contemporary Chinese is quoted here.

of 慎 as *zhengzhong* 珍重 (to treasure; to take something as precious) would subsume the meaning of ‘heeding’ (2004b, 48-53).

Liao Mingchun asserts that the “Wuxing” text is the key to “Yanyan” (2000b, 29). What is meant by 獨 in “Kongzi shilun” may well fall in line with the notion of single-mindedness in “Wuxing”, but using the “Wuxing” text to interpret Confucius’ comment and the poetry of “Yanyan” is problematic. Firstly it presupposes that the poem is a diegesis about Zhuang Jiang and Daigui, which, as has been explained in Chapter 3, remotely relies on exophoric historical references. The allusion of feathers to the mourning sash is thus a foregone conclusion of this presupposition. Secondly, in reading this poem as a macabre flight of the swallows, it focuses on one verse only (差池其羽 the disarray of feathers) at the expense of ignoring the others, and that the poem depicts the flight of the swallows to the countryside and the woods,¹³¹ not the sea as “Wuxing” has suggested. Thus “Wuxing” is taking the poem out of context, which is a common practice in ancient times (Li Xueqin 2004, 283). Lastly, there appears to be no linguistic congruity between the texts of “Wuxing” and “Kongzi shilun”: the concept of 慎獨 in “Wuxing” is an introvertive moral discipline (that is, *sheti* 舍體, transcending the materialistic or somatic) within the intrapersonal framework of the *junzi*, but in “Kongzi shilun” Confucius focuses on the theme of emotion (燕燕之情) whose intentionality is an interpersonal response. Whilst I agree to read 獨 as single-mindedness, the explication of Confucius’ idea of single-mindedness within the context of “Yanyan” needs to be re-stated.

As noted previously, ascribing “Yanyan” to Zhuang Jiang and Daigui is problematic. Chen Zhi has adduced historical and archaeological materials that point to Wu Geng 武庚, the son of King Zhou 紂 and the last prince of the Shang House as the author. The fourth stanza, identifying the poet as *guaren* 寡人 reveals his nobility. Chen asserts that the motif of the swallows betrays Wu Geng’s reminiscence of his lost state, as the bird was symbolic of the fallen domain according to the Shang totemic culture. The binome *xiashang* 下上 (earth and heaven) was a typical Shang rhetoric for which the Zhou vernacular would say *shangxia* 上下 (heaven and earth) (1999b, 20-1). The bride Zhong shi Ren 仲氏任 refers to the second daughter of the Ren clan from Zhi 摯, a subject state of Shang. The Rens

¹³¹ The verses “遠送于野” and “遠送于南 (林)”.

have had their daughters married to the princes of Zhou as can be read from “Da ming” 大明 (Ode 236) and the *Guoyu* 國語.¹³² Furthermore this poem originated from Wu Geng’s fiefdom, the state of Bei 邶¹³³ which was his power base and refuge after his failed attempts of resistance against Zhou. Bei was located about 190 kilometres northeast of Chengzhou 成周, the new Zhou capital established by the Duke of Zhou for overseeing the Shang remnants. This provides the geographic evidence of the journey heading south (遠送於南) (1999b 19, 21).¹³⁴ Chen asserts that the poet of “Yanyan” is likely to be Wu Geng, and “the only lady with the surname Ren other than Da Ren 大任 (the mother of King Wen) who came from the domain of Shang to marry a prince of Zhou was the wife of the Duke of Zhou” (1999b, 19). However, Chen stops short of affirming Zhong shi Ren, the bride whom Wu Geng escorted in the poem, was the bride who would become the Duke of Zhou’s wife. Chen claims that “Yanyan” was Wu Geng’s poem sending Zhong shi Ren off to marry the conqueror, which was an occasion of disenchantment rather than celebration to a fallen prince. At the same time, Wu was lamenting his succumbed domain and reminiscing about his forefathers (1999b, 18; 21).

Although Chen Zhi’s proposition is based on indirect evidence, it has been more convincingly argued than that of the Mao preface. However some questions have remained unanswered: what was the relationship between the putative poet Wu Geng and Zhong shi Ren? Was she the same person as the Duke of Zhou’s wife as implied? Why was he, a head of state, seeing her off to her wedding? Did this escort comply with the protocol or *li* of the day? Though to some extent Chen’s reading justifies the placement of the fourth stanza within “Yanyan”, their incoherent textual structure still points to an uncomfortable pastiche, and without rejecting any of Chen’s interpretation, the two parts may still be read as different poems.

¹³² “Da ming” 大明: “摯仲氏任，自彼殷商，來嫁于周，曰嬪于京。乃及王季，維德之行。大任有身，生此文王。” (Ren, the second of the princesses of Zhi, / From [the domain of] Yin-shang, / Came to be married to the prince of Zhou, / And became his wife in his capital / Both she and king Ji, / Were entirely virtuous. / [Then] Da-ren became pregnant, / And gave birth to our king Wen.) (Legge 1994, 4:433) *Guoyu* 國語: “摯疇二國任性...姜氏任氏之女，世為王嬪妃也” (The states of Zhi and Chou had the surname Ren. The daughters of the [Jiang] and Ren houses were the wives and consorts of the Zhou kings for generations.) (Chen Zhi 1999b, 17)

¹³³ Wu Geng was known as Wangzi Lufu 王子祿父 (Prince Lufu) in the *Yi zhoushu* 逸周書. He was enfeifed at Bei by the Zhou his conqueror to rule the Shang people (Chen Zhi 1999b, 21).

¹³⁴ As noted previously Wen Yiduo glosses 南 as 林 and if he is right then ‘a journey to the south’ is untenable.

In “Kongzi shilun” Confucius seems to be extremely careful with reading history into the odes. Being silent on the identities of the historical personae and the event to which “Yanyan” refers, Confucius’ ahistorical perspective has licensed interpretations that are textually based and aesthetically inspired. By letting the text speak “Yanyan” is voicing the grief of the poet in seeing his/her loved one off to her wedding: they may be the parent(s), a brother or sister, a lover, or even a close friend of the bride. According to ancient rites, a father should bid the bride farewell in the main hall of the family mansion; a mother, not beyond the door of the family shrine; brothers and sisters should stop at the gate of the bastion.¹³⁵ However, Wen Yiduo concludes that it is meaningless to ascribe those rules and historical events to the poem (1948, 2.167). I am inclined to be more liberal in treating the escort and bride as lovers as far as the text can demonstrate support for such a reading. For the time being it is assumed that the fourth stanza is not part of “Yanyan”, for reasons to be explained later.

Each of the three stanzas of “Yanyan” opens with a vivid imagery of the flying swallows. The number of swallows is not specified; the reduplicative binome 燕燕 may be taken to mean more than one swallow and it makes poetic sense to assume that there is a pair of them. The swallows are flying, but their movements do not seem to be coordinated or in any way harmonious, as implied by the binomes *chachi* 差池 (uneven), *xiehang* 頡頏 (flying up/down) and 下上 (below/above) which are binary oppositions. In the first stanza their wings are unevenly displayed, in the second stanza, one swallow is flying up high and the other low down. In the third stanza, one tweets from above and the other below. These imageries, when deconstructed, convey the idea of discordance in their apparent togetherness, premonishing a parting of ways.¹³⁶ Then the purpose of the journey is revealed: “之子于歸” – instead of adopting Legge’s translation of 歸 as ‘returning home’, the conventional meaning of a girl getting married is considered more appropriate in the present context. The escort is said to be accompanying the bride far into the

¹³⁵ My translation, see the *Guliang zhushu*, *Shisanjiang zhushu* 穀梁注疏、十三經注疏: “禮送女，父不下堂，母不出祭門，諸母兄弟不出闕門 … 送女踰竟非禮也。”

¹³⁶ Chen Zhi observes that treating swallows as the traditional poetic allusion of parting may have come from the misreading “Yanyan” (1999b, 6). Despite this, the folklore that swallows fly to the sea to die would equally validate such an allusion (see the “Wuxing” bamboo text as discussed earlier). Irrespective of these opinions, a sense of farewell and parting comes strongly through the text of “Yanyan”.

countryside “遠送于野 … 遠于將之 … 遠送于南”;¹³⁷ the word 遠 does not only denote physical distance, but also emotional severance and remoteness. The poem does not provide any clues as to the size of the bridal retinue, or any more information about the journey, but it is clear that there is no communication between the escort and the bride. Could it only mean that he is accompanying her closely in person? It is quite possible that in accompanying her he is keeping a distance from her and her entourage; his looking on till he can no longer see her (瞻望弗及) suggests that he may be virtually ‘seeing’ (in the true sense of the word) her off (*musong* 目送). Readers are at liberty to speculate: they might have been secret lovers, in which case it would be improper for him to be part of the retinue. He could be a palace guard or a lowly manorial servant and she a lady of high station, in which case he could be part of the bridal entourage but their love violates the rules of propriety. In any case their romantic affair is a taboo, let alone the public display of their emotions. Or else it could be clandestine and unrequited love: she does not know he who loves her exists, and that he is stealthily seeing her off. Of course no hugs and kisses in public are expected from *au revoir* ancient Chinese style, but the lack of communication between the escort and the bride in the face of such profound love is discomfiting; they cannot even exchange words of farewell. I suggest that there is more to their emotional separation than the physical. Confucius’ comment is 燕燕之情以其獨也, in which 獨 can be glossed as loneliness apart from single-mindedness. It is more than just the poet’s feeling of loneliness; his love for her (or their mutual love) will be kept to themselves (in isolation as 獨), as required by the rules of propriety, or forever buried in memory now that she is someone’s wife. In the cruel silence of the wilderness broken only by the occasional chirping of the swallows, the poet’s emotional tension builds up and then bursts – not being able to catch a glimpse of her anymore he bursts into tears that fall like rain (泣涕如雨).

The inclusion of the fourth stanza as part of “Yanyan” complicates the structure and the theme of the poem. Stanzas that have been purportedly misplaced in the wrong poems are not uncommon and a number of examples have been identified by scholars over the years (Lu Xixing 2002, 403-19);¹³⁸ “Yanyan” may well be

¹³⁷ See the meaning of 歸 and 南 noted previously.

¹³⁸ Lu lists five odes that are believed to have stanzas misplaced in the poems: “Juen’er” 卷耳 (Ode 3), “Xinglu” 行露 (Ode 17), “Huanghuang zhihua” 皇皇者華 (Ode 163), “Du ren shi” 都人士 (Ode 225) and “Juan A” 卷阿 (Ode 252).

added to the list. Arguments for or against such readings are by no means conclusive. Chen’s interpretation of the poem (without excising the fourth stanza) reveals complex motifs of farewell, lamentation and remembrance as discussed earlier. Whilst Confucius has not confirmed or denied the placement of the fourth stanza in “Yanyan”, his reading of single-mindedness and sincerity as the theme of the poem does not seem to accommodate divided attentions to lost love, lost domain and lost forefathers. Although Confucius was a descendent of the Shang House,¹³⁹ he was an adherent of the Zhou regime and would most unlikely be sympathetic to Wu Geng’s course of subversion, let alone promoting it as devout or sincere emotions.¹⁴⁰

There appears to be insufficient evidence to determine the inclusion or exclusion of the fourth stanza in “Yanyan”. In any case Confucius’ critical focus here is the sincerity and whole-heartedness of *qing*. My interpretation of the first three stanzas is an attempt to uncover the implicit meaning of “Yanyan” and its literary beauty behind the text. It would also be instructive to recall the role of the reader discussed in Chapter 1 as the justification for the above reading. This interpretation is inspired by Confucius’ comment on its theme – the devoutness of love in the face of the utter impossibility of nuptial union. Confucius might not have endorsed such an unfruitful love affair or *mésalliance* as can be seen in his comment on “Hanguang”, nonetheless he commends the sincerity and unreserved devotion to love as noble human emotions, just as he commends the same emotions evinced in “Wanqiu”.¹⁴¹

The uniqueness of “Kongzi shilun” is evident in its literary perspective, glossing, as an example, “Yanyan” from the viewpoint of *qing* whilst traditional interpretations have read it as a farewell poem versed in some historical event. The following table shows a selection of past and contemporary interpretations:

¹³⁹ Confucius’s ancestors were from Song 宋, and Song was the state of Shang descendants. See “The hereditary house of Confucius” and “The hereditary house of Song Wei Zhi” of the *Shiji* 史記·孔子世家、宋微子世家.

¹⁴⁰ *Analects* 3.14: 論語·八佾: 子曰: “周監於二代, 郁郁乎文哉! 吾從周。” (The Master said, “The Chou is resplendent in culture, having before it the example of the two previous dynasties. I am for the Chou.” (Lau 1992b, 2-23)

¹⁴¹ Confucius advises against unfruitful courtship in his comment on “Hanguang” (不求不可得, 不攻不可能, 不亦知恆乎). On the other hand, he endorses sincerity as evinced in “Wanqiu” (洵有情而無望 – irrespective of whether 望 means trickery or hope). See respective annotations in Chapter 3.

“Mao Preface”	Zhuang Jiang’s (head wife) farewell song for Daigui (concubine) ¹⁴²
<i>Lushi</i> , <i>Lie nü zhuan</i>	Lady Ding Jiang (post-dated Zhuang Jiang by some 170 years) bidding her widowed daughter-in-law farewell ¹⁴³
<i>Hanshi</i>	Ding Jiang’s (head wife) farewell of a concubine (Wang Xianqian 1987, 137-8)
<i>Qishi</i> “Wuxing”	A farewell song; swallows flying to the sea, no historical figures named ¹⁴⁴
Wang Zhi (王質 1135-1189), Cui Shu (崔述 1740-1816), Wen Yiduo	A head-of-state sending off his sister to her wedding ¹⁴⁵
Gao Heng (高亨 1900-1986)	The young duke of Wei seeing his lover off to be wedded to another person (Gao 1980, 38)
Li Chendong (李辰冬 1907-1983)	Yin Jifu seeing his divorced wife off (Li 1961, 201-2)
Lan Jusun (藍菊蓀 1925-2007)	A folk song written by a village lad whose lover is to marry another man (Lan 1982, 123)
Chen Zhi (陳致)	Wu Geng the last prince of Shang lamenting his lost love, domain and forefathers (Chen 1999b)

“Kongzi shilun” does not relate “Yanyan” to any historical figures, but points out that its theme is *qing*, the unreserved devotion to love. Essentially *qing* is Confucius’ critical angle of interpreting most of the other poems. With the above interpretation of “Yanyan” I propose to modify Legge’s translation as follows:

燕燕于飛	The swallows go flying about,
差池其羽	With their wings unevenly displayed.
之子于歸	The lady was on her way to get married,
遠送于野	And I escorted her far into the country.
瞻望弗及	I looked till I could no longer see her,
泣涕如雨	And my tears fell down like rain.
燕燕于飛	The swallows go flying about,
頡之頡之	Now up, now down.
之子于歸	The lady was on her way to get married,
遠于將之	And far did I accompany her.
瞻望弗及	I looked till I could no longer see her,

¹⁴² See Chapter 4.

¹⁴³ For sources of the Han, Lu and Qi tradition see Wang xianqian 1987, 137-8; for *Lie nü zhuan* see Liu Xiang 1998, 5-6.

¹⁴⁴ For “Wuxing” see Chapter 4.

¹⁴⁵ See Wen Yiduo 1948, 2:165

佇立以泣	And long I stood and wept.
燕燕于飛	The swallows go flying about;
下上其音	From below, from above, comes their twittering.
之子于歸	The lady was on her way to get married,
遠送于南	And far did I escort her to the woods. ¹⁴⁶
瞻望弗及	I looked till I could no longer see her,
實勞我心	And great was the grief of my heart.

2. “Getan” 葛覃

Though the manuscript does not explicitly deny reading “Getan” as a poem praising the virtues of the queen, through ascribing its theme of ancestral reverence (祗初之志) to *minxing* (民性 the people’s emotional disposition), Confucius has indirectly refuted the moralistic interpretation of the *Maoshi*. “Getan” comprises three stanzas each of which has six verses:

葛之覃兮	How the dolichos spread itself out,
施于中谷	Extending to the middle of the valley!
維葉萋萋	Its leaves were luxuriant;
黃鳥于飛	The yellow birds flew about,
集于灌木	And collected on the thickly growing trees,
其鳴喈喈	Their pleasant notes resounding far.
葛之覃兮	How the dolichos spread itself out,
施于中谷	Extending to the middle of the valley!
維葉莫莫	Its leaves were luxuriant and dense.
是刈是穫	I cut it and I boiled it,
為絺為綌	And made both fine cloth and coarse,
服之無斃	Which I will wear without getting tired of it.
言告師氏	I have told the matron,
言告言歸	Who will announce that I am going to see my parents.
薄污我私	I will wash my private clothes clean,
薄澣我衣	And I will rinse my robes.
害澣害否	Which need to be rinsed, which do not?
歸寧父母	I am going back to visit my parents.

(Legge 1994, 4:6-7)

¹⁴⁶ According to Wen Yiduo’s research *nan* 南 does not mean ‘south’ but the word is a homonym (or a close homonym) of 林 (woods), thus “遠送于林” is parallel to “遠送于野” (1948, 2:166).

Legge's translation is clearly based on the "Little preface" which interprets this poem as

[setting] forth the natural disposition of the queen.
We see her in her parents' house, with her mind bent on woman's work; thrifty and economical, wearing her washed clothes, and honouring and reverencing her matron-teacher. Being such, she might well [in after time] pay her visit to her parents, and transform the kingdom on the subject of woman's ways. (Legge 1994, 4:37)

Zhu Xi subscribes to the above interpretation and adds that the poem was written by the queen (n.d., 1:4-5). Dissenters argue that it is unlikely for the queen residing in the palace to be able to hear the singing of the yellow birds in the valleys, or to make fabric out of hemp herself, to say the least of washing her clothes personally. Fang Yurun observes that whilst the queen was the unlikely persona, the poem speaks of a plebeian married woman who was about to return to her parents for a visit (1986, 75-6). This interpretation takes *shishi* 師氏 as a matron (a female teacher) who was responsible for instructing younger women on domestic routines (Zhu Xi n.d., 1:4). The term *guining* 歸寧 normally means a married woman returning to her parents' home for a visit. These have led most commentators to believe that the persona of the poem is female. However, 歸寧 is also applicable to men returning home for visiting parents.¹⁴⁷ At the same time 師氏 could also be a male officer of the court, as it appears in Ode 193 "Shiyue zhijiao" 十月之交 and Ode 258 "Yunhan" 雲漢 (Legge 1994, 4:322, 533).¹⁴⁸ Wen Yiduo considers 師氏 a low-ranking officer (2004, 3:296) but Li Chendong argues otherwise as 師氏 also denotes the rank of the king's guard. Li also observes from the rhetorical convention of the *Odes* that *yi* 衣 in the *Shijing* is not meant to be a generic term for clothing but an official robe. Thus Li concludes that "Getan" tells of a soldier taking leave of his commander (言告師氏), washing and rinsing his civilian clothes and official robe (薄汚我私...薄澣我衣), in readiness for home coming to his parents (歸寧父母) (1974, 89). In glossing the poem as one that honours parents and ancestors instead of the matron as the "Little preface" has suggested, Confucius has provided a more convincing interpretation than that of the Han Scholars.

¹⁴⁷ See Lu Ji 陸機, 陸士衡集·思歸賦: "冀王事之暇豫, 庶歸寧之有時。" (1988, 24)

¹⁴⁸ 十月之交: "檣維師氏" (Ju is captain of the guards) and 雲漢: "趣馬師氏" (The master of the horse, the commander of the guards) (Legge 1994, 322, 533)

As mentioned previously, Li Chendong has cogently argued that the entire *Book of Odes* was attributed to Yin Jifu, an officer and a gentleman of King Xuan of Zhou. Li further claims that the verse “是刈是穫” describes the making of the fabric by Yin’s wife Zhongshi 仲氏 and “服之無斃” refers to Yin wearing the clothes that she made¹⁴⁹ (1974, 93). The imagery of the yellow birds can be read as an allusion to married couples and in this case, a soldier’s yearning for his wife. Whilst washing clothes is a daily chore for women, it would be a special occasion for a soldier, to whom it means relief from combat duty or; better still, home-coming as the battle is over. Thus a soldier washing clothes and home-coming seem to be more worthy of poetic diegesis than a woman doing her routine. Despite the validity or otherwise of Li’s claim on the historical personage of this poem, the reading of “Getan” as a returning soldier’s poem can be textually justified, without pinpointing the identity of the soldier.

What, then, is the significance of Confucius’ comment in relation to the interpretation of “Getan”? The significance surely lies in the linguistic congruity of the common motif of clothing fabric (絺綌), the civilian and official clothing (私 and 衣). Li posits that the soldier¹⁵⁰ was eager to show his parents the official robe (or uniform) as a symbol of achievement of which he was proud (1974, 94), implying that his expedition and official status had brought honour and glory to the family. His chain of thought issued from the dolichos, then to the making of the fabric, from which clothes were made, kindling the yearning for his parents (and more implicitly, his wife). Confucius states that people are emotionally disposed to retracing the source of goodness, to which a parallel is seen in the clothing fabric and the dolichos, so too should ancestors be venerated. If this interpretation is adopted some of the verses translated by Legge could perhaps be revised, *mutatis mutandis*:

…維葉莫莫	…Its leaves were luxuriant and dense.
是刈是穫	It was cut and boiled,
為絺為綌…	Cloth was made, both fine and coarse…
言告師氏	I have told my commander,
…薄污我私	I will wash my civilian clothes clean,
薄澣我衣…	And I will rinse my official robes....

¹⁴⁹ It is noted that Confucius’ comment does not concern the yearning for the wife but that remains as a sub-theme of the poem.

¹⁵⁰ Li’s assertion that Yin Jifu was the author of the poem has been contended by other scholars. When Li’s opinion is quoted in this thesis concerning the poet, the author will simply be regarded as unknown, unless otherwise stated.

It could be argued that in this case Confucius' comment has not directly clarified the historical reading of the poem. However, his reading of the poem depicting human feelings towards ancestors is textually based and more convincing than that of the Mao tradition.

3. “Gantang” 甘棠

As previously noted, Michael Hunter questions if the comments in “Kongzi shilun” are “teachings”, and that the audience were more interested in how the comments were said rather than what were said (2009, 20-1). By his own admission his argument hangs on “Gantang” alone (2009, 13). Hunter's doubts could perhaps be answered by uncovering the deeper meaning of the comments and the poem (i.e. what were said), beyond what analyses of textual parallels can offer.

The simplicity of both the commentary and the poetry of “Gantang” praising the concept of *noblesse oblige* belies the referential meaning of both texts. Whilst this poem is explicitly expressing respect to Shao Gong, Confucius has not clarified whether Shao Gong refers to Ji Shi 姬奭 or Shaomu Gong Fu 召穆公虎 as discussed earlier in Chapter 3. Furthermore it raises questions of the connection between the personage and the ancestral temple as an iconic institution, as there is no mention of the latter in the poem. Can one simply synecdochically take Shao Gong or the pear tree for the ancestral temple and with what justification?

According to Wen Yiduo the pear tree is not merely symbolic. Wen quotes from a number of ancient texts: “Diguan Situ” of the *Zhou Li* 周禮·地官司徒 which records that the ancestral temple was built where the most suitable tree was found (2004, 3:318-9):

大司徒之職… 設其社稷之壇，而樹之田主，各以其野之所宜木，遂以名其社與其野。(Lau 1993, 20)

The duty of the grand master ... is to establish the temple for the earth god and its boundary walls, and to choose a suitable native tree to be the deity of the fields, naming the shrine and the fields after the tree. (My translation)

Also from “On Ghost III” of the *Mozi* 墨子·明鬼下 the most luxuriant and elegant tree was chosen as the site for the temple:

且惟昔者虞、夏、商、周三代之聖王，其始建國營都日，必擇國之正壇，置以為宗廟；必擇木之脩茂者，立以為藪位。(Mo Di 2001, 2: 235-6)

When in ancient times the sage-kings of Yu, Xia, Shang, and the three kings of Zhou first founded their empires and built their capitals, they all chose the central altar on which to build the ancestral temple. They would select the most luxuriant and elegant among the trees to be set up in the temple-court. (My translation)

Wen explains that *zouwei* 藪位 stands for *congshe* 叢社, the temple-court. As it is recorded in “Wangji” of the *Liji* 禮記·王制, disputes were heard in the temple-court where the luxuriant tree was, for the dispensation of justice:

成獄辭，史以獄成告於正，正聽之。正以獄成告于大司寇，大司寇聽之棘木之下。大司寇以獄之成告於王，王命三公參聽之。三公以獄之成告於王，王三又，然後制刑。

The evidence in a criminal case having thus been all taken and judgment given, the clerk reported it all to the director (of the district), who heard it and reported it to the Grand minister of Crime. He also heard it in the outer court under the tree, and then reported it to the king, who ordered the three ducal ministers, with the minister and director, again to hear it. When they had (once more) reported it to the king, he considered it with the three mitigating conditions, and then only determined the punishment.

(Legge 1967, 1:236-7; modified)

Wen asserts that the luxuriant tree chosen for this purpose was called *shemu* 社木 and in the south as in “Gantang” the pear tree was the *shemu*. The *shemu* was where the deities and spirits resided and was where justice was meted out (2004, 3:318-9). When the people venerated Shao Gong and the pear tree, veneration was ultimately extended to the temple-court as a symbol of the jurisprudence exercised over the people. Confucius states that the object of the people’s veneration is not simply the person, but is projected to his office and the benevolence of his governance, the ancestral temple that symbolizes the state (宗廟之敬, slip 24). According to Confucius the theme of “Gantang” is the human emotion of respect extended from the person (the deified ruler) to his office, and then to the authority of the state.

Confucius’ comment does not explicitly clarify the identity of the protagonist in the poem. By addressing him as Shao Gong rather than Shao Bo as is the case in the poem Confucius complicates the issue further as commentators have argued that the titles would distinguished the two. With his mention of the ancestral temple the

ambiguity of poetic meaning has gone beyond the questions of the size of the tree or whether he has simply rested or lodged under it (as discussed in Chapter 3). Wen Yiduo's approach as set out above seems to have provided reasonable background information for understanding the poem in relation to Confucius' comment. Whilst the historical facts await further evidence and investigation, Confucius' comment focuses our attention on the emotional aspects of the poem. On this note it would be instructive to recall Mencius' hermeneutical advice as mentioned earlier: one should not allow the words to get in the way of the sentence, nor the sentence to get in the way of the sense.

4. “Datian” 大田

Confucius considers “知言而有禮” to be the central theme of the final stanza of “Datian”. By collocating 言 and 禮 Confucius is implying that 言 is the medium of expressing 禮, or 禮 is manifested in 言. Commentators have held that 知言 means proficiency in speech as previously noted. “Datian” comprises four stanzas; the first three portray the planting and harvesting activities of the farming community. Paradoxically, the fourth (last) stanza contains no dialogue (言) but a description of the proceedings of the sacrificial ceremony.¹⁵¹ As can be seen below this stanza is a narrative of the festive scene in which *zengsun* goes to meet the farming community and officiates the ceremony:

曾孫來止	<i>Zengsun</i> the presiding noble ¹⁵² will come,
以其婦子	His wives and children,
饁彼南畝	Will bring food to those [at work] on the south-lying acres. ¹⁵³
田畯至喜	<i>Tianjun</i> the god of husbandry ¹⁵⁴ will be glad.
來方禋祀	They will come and offer pure sacrifices to the Spirits of the four quarters.

¹⁵¹ Chao Fulin has also noted that this stanza contains no dialogues but by glossing the word *ye* 饁 (delivering food to the workers in the fields) in “饁彼南畝”, the notion of conversation is subsumed. Thus 知言 would mean *Zengsun* sending regards and saying thanks to the peasants (2008c, 141).

¹⁵² Legge translates 曾孫 as ‘distant descendant’. According to “Qulixia” of the *Liji* 禮記·曲禮下 it refers to the officiating nobleman at sacrificial proceedings (Liao Mingchun 2004, 53).

¹⁵³ Another possible reading is that 饁 is a ritual of bringing food to the deity (Liao Mingchun 2004, 51).

¹⁵⁴ Legge translates *tianjun* 田畯 as ‘surveyors of the fields’. According to Liao Mingchun, it refers to the god of husbandry (2004, 53). In fact 田畯 is not listed as an official title in the *Zhouli* but is a deity whose favour is to be sought, see 周禮·春官宗伯 “Chunguan Zongbo” *Zhou Li* (Lau 1993, 43).

以其騂黑	With their victims of red [cattle] and black [swine],
與其黍稷	And their preparations of grains:
以享以祀	Thus offering, thus sacrificing,
以介景福	Thus increasing our bright happiness.

(Legge 1994, 4:212; modified)

The synoptic reading of the poem and Confucius' comment points to the need for defining 言 and 知言 in their linguistic contexts. Consider the following passage taken from “Contra Twelve Philosophers” of the *Xunzi* (荀子·非十二子):

…言而當、知也，默而當，亦知也，故知默猶知言也。故多言而類，聖人也；少言而法，君子也....

... Speaking when it is appropriate to do so is knowledge; remaining silent when appropriate is also knowledge. Hence knowing when to remain silent is as important as knowing when to speak. Therefore, a sage, though he speaks often, always observes the logical categories appropriate to what he discusses. A gentleman, though he speaks but seldom, always accords with the model. (Knoblock 1988, 1:225-6)

Confucius's teaching is that 言 is not to be indiscriminately uttered, as he says:

可與言而不與之言，失人；不可與言而與之言，失言… (論語·衛靈公)

To fail to speak to a man who is capable of benefiting is to let a man go to waste. To speak to a man who is incapable of benefiting is to let one's word go to waste

(Analects 15. 8; Lau 1992, 150-1)

Liu Xinfang also quotes the above passage from the *Xunzi* but arrives at the conclusion that 知言 means the “accurately expressed diction” of *zengsun*'s prayers (2003, 238).¹⁵⁵ However, as Yu Zhihui rightly points out, the Confucian tradition does not endorse eloquence (2005, 33) but considers slowness of speech to be close to benevolence (木訥近仁) (Analects 8.27). The concepts of 言 and 知言 are also discussed in the Daoist texts “Knowledge rambling in the north” of the *Zhuangzi* 莊子·知北遊:

…夫知者不言，言者不知，故聖人行不言之教…狂屈聞之，以黃帝為知言。

¹⁵⁵ In Liu's words: “曾孫賽禱，其言有當，是‘知言’也”。 Liu considers 知言 refers to accurate expression in words.

... “Those who know (the Dao) do not speak of it; those who speak of it do not know it;” and “Hence the sage conveys his instructions without the use of speech.” ...Heedless Blurter heard of (all this), and considered that Huang-Di knew how to express himself....

(Legge 1962, 58-60)

In the above passage 知言 means proficient in expressing oneself and that the sage does not necessarily use spoken words 言 to convey his instructions. Suffice it to say that 知言 could mean adept in instruction (不言之教), with or without words (知默猶知言).

On the other hand Confucian perspectives frequently consider words 言 in parallel with *xing* (行 practice), as the binary pair of the spoken and the unspoken. In the *Analects* Confucius has much to say about 言 and 行:

君子欲訥於言，而敏於行（論語・里仁, *Analects* 4.24)

It is desirable for a gentleman to be slow of speech but quick in action.

... 聽其言而信其行...聽其言而觀其行（論語・公冶長, *Analects* 5.10)

... [I] take on trust a man's deeds after having listened to his words ... having listened to a man's words I go on to observe his deeds.

言忠信，行篤敬（論語・衛靈公, *Analects* 15.6)

... in word... conscientious and trustworthy ... in deed single-minded and reverent...

...言不及義，好行小慧（論語・衛靈公, *Analects* 15.17)

... indulge themselves in acts of petty cleverness without ever touching on the subject of morality in their conversation ...

(Lau 1992b, 35, 39, 149, 153)

These maxims have their own didactic meanings which do not necessarily concern the bamboo text in question. Although 言 and 行 are apparently disparate human behaviour their collocation in the Confucian contexts indicates that they are, among other things, complementary traits, or modes of expressing oneself and by which one is understood and judged. I argue that by juxtaposing 言 and 行 together they represent one's expression in totality. As discussed previously, the word 言 is polysemic and from the above passages, 知言 means knowing when or when not to speak, and knowing how to, or is adept in, expressing oneself. If the gesture of maintaining silence is within the meaning of 知言, then by extrapolation, not only

are spoken words considered to be 言, so too are non-verbal gestures and actions, in the broader sense of the word. As it is written in “Yueji” of the *Liji* 禮記·樂記: “[When one is] heaven-like, one is believed without the use of words” (天則不言而信).

With the concepts of 知言, 言 and 行 clarified, the comment “知言而有禮” can be read in conjunction with “Datian”. Throughout the final stanza of “Datian” *zengsun* has not spoken to the peasants. But his visit to the fields with his wives and children (whether or not they bring food to the folks) as a gesture of condescension is *zengsun*’s non-verbal communication with the people. When *zengsun* presides over the sacrificial ceremony, the very act of offering sacrifice involving the preparation of victims and grains in accordance with ritual proceedings is *li* in action. Thus irrespective of whether spoken words are involved, *zengsun* has effectively instructed the farming community the meaning of *li* through action (少言而法). Thus through the final stanza of “Datian” Confucius has explicated the praxis of *li*, by which a society involving the ruler and the common people, the natural elements and the environment so critical for a good harvest, the supplication for blessing from the supernatural are all harmoniously regulated and served.

5. “Mugua” 木瓜

From the relationships between the ruler and the ruled, the natural and the supernatural, Confucius moves to the relationship between individuals, ascribing the trait of goodwill expression with gifts to the emotional disposition of the people (民性固然，其隱志必有以喻也) (slip 20). The poem runs as follows:

投我以木瓜	There was presented to me a quince,
報之以瓊琚	And I returned for it a beautiful Ju-gem;
匪報也	Not as a return for it,
永以為好也	But that our friendship might be lasting.
投我以木桃	There was presented to me a peach,
報之以瓊瑤	And I returned for it a beautiful Yao-gem;
匪報也	Not as a return for it,
永以為好也	But that our friendship might be lasting.
投我以木李	There was presented to me a plum,
報之以瓊玖	And I returned for it a beautiful Jiu-gem;
匪報也	Not as a return for it,

永以為好也 But that our friendship might be lasting.
(Legge 1994, 4:107-8)

Confucius' reading is entirely different from the "Little preface", which states that this poem was composed by the people of Wei 衛 praising Duke Huan of Qi 齊桓公 (683-642 BCE) for not only reinstating the state of Wei from her defeat by the people of Di 狄, but also giving generously gifts of carriages and horses etc. Zhu Xu suggests that this poem portrays man and woman (presumably admirers) exchanging gifts; it is of the same ilk as "Jingnu" 靜女 (Ode 42) – "a poem of lechery, elopement and tryst" (淫奔相會之詩) (2:15, 33). Yao Jihen considers the exchange of gifts to be between friends, not necessarily admirers of the opposite sex (1838, 4:28), a view supported by Fang Yurun (1986, 188).

Applying the methodology known as "cognitive poetics of microchiasm" Middendorf concludes from her analysis of the rhetoric of "Mugua" that it is full of paronomasia. *Mugua* the fruit, as Middendorf asserts, is symbolic of the womb and female fertility. The jade pieces of *ju* 琚, *yao* 瑤 and *jiu* 玖 are malapropistic wordplays on 居 (habitation or cohabitation), 嬉 or 遙 (play) and 久 (long-lasting) (2010, 219-24). The rhetoric is suggestive of flirtatious advances if not dissembled seduction.

Zhu Xu further comments on the unequal value of the gifts exchanged in that the more valuable the gift returned, the stronger the intention of building a lasting friendship (2:33). However Confucius does not discriminate the poem from being a love song or a wanton poem, nor does he dwell on the comparison of the value of the gifts but is emphatic on the intention and the rituals of expression. Confucius has also said on another occasion that the spirit of *li* is more important than the material values of silk and jade.¹⁵⁶ His comment that gifts serve the purpose of expressing goodwill echoes that of the poem: the returning of gift is not for the sake of returning it (匪報也), but to express the wish for a long lasting friendship (永以為好也). Through his comments on this poem Confucius expounds the concept that the emotion of expressing goodwill finds expression in *li*. What matters is the sincere

¹⁵⁶ *Analects* 17.11: The Master said, "Surely when one says: 'The rites, the rites,' it is not enough merely to mean presents of jade and silk. Surely when one says: 'Music, music,' it is not enough merely to mean bells and drums." (論語·陽貨: "子曰: 禮云禮云, 玉帛云乎哉? 樂云樂云, 鐘鼓云乎哉!") (Lau 1992b, 174-5)

wish for a lasting friendship, the expression of which through the rules of propriety should not be taken lightly (人不可狃也).

6. Summary

In exploring the implicit meaning of the foregoing odes, “Kongzi shilun” is found to have enhanced current understanding of the poems, in that it has directed readers’ attention away from the moral issues espoused by traditional interpretations and focused on the notions of *qing* and *li*. Although it has not clarified directly the contentious issues besetting the commentarial tradition; for instance, the historical personage or events to which the poems are supposed to depict, its ahistorical reading is textually based and inspiring. As elucidated above, the manuscript author considers the key to “Yanyan” to be the devoutness of love. He considers gift-giving to be the emotional disposition of the people who wish to express their goodwill of friendship, as seen in his explication of “Mugua”. It is also the emotional disposition of the people to venerate their ancestors and the ancestral temple, the notions of which are revealed in “Getan” and “Gantang”. “Mugua” underscores the importance of proprietary rules, despite its possible sensual reading by modern scholars. In the case of “Datian” the praxis of propriety is well communicated in action as the means of instruction. These poems are examples of the precepts of “Kongzi shilun” reading the odes from the perspective of *qing* and *li*.

Chapter 5 The Sensual and the Moral

Cherchez la femme!

– Alexandre Dumas
The Mohicans of Paris

... even in the books of falsehood,
to the eyes of the sage reader,
a pale reflection of the divine wisdom can shine.

– Umberto Eco
The Name of the Rose

The last chapter has explored the implicit meaning of the more complex poems as examples of how “Kongzi shilun” enhances one’s understanding of poetry. This chapter will continue with the critical study by focusing on the broader purport – the concepts of the sensual and the moral – of the manuscript and the commentarial tradition, with special attention to the pre-Qin 先秦 and Han 漢 scholarship. The fact that the Han erudition has subsequently become the exegetical paradigm of the *Odes* renders it an appropriate backdrop for reviewing “Kongzi shilun”. In this thesis, the ‘sensual’ means the rich sentiments embracing the human emotions, passions and feelings that the manuscript author reads from the poems; the ‘moral’ refers to the prudish tradition (exemplified by the Han scholarship) of treating poetry as a pedagogic tool of the sage kings to instruct the people. These notions manifest as *qing* and *li* within the context of poetry. I shall argue that *qing* and *li* form the critical framework within which “Kongzi shilun” explicates poetic meaning. *Qing* is not a novel idea to the Han and post-Han readers of the *Odes*. The “Great preface” has mentioned it without looking into its details; instead it has shied away from the notion and shifted to a moral reading of the *Odes*. “Kongzi shilun” is

found to have filled that elision by revealing human emotions and passions as the key to poetic meaning. In the course of delineating the meaning of *qing*, I shall contend, with evidence drawn from extant texts and “Kongzi shilun”, against Graham’s generalization that *qing* means ‘the facts’ and never ‘passions’ in pre-Han literature (1990, 59). In light of Confucius’ sensual reading it would be opportune to re-visit the question raised in Chapter 1: what does Confucius mean by *si wu xie* 思無邪 and *Zheng sheng yin* 鄭聲淫? Such remarks have bewildered and divided generations of exegetes but clarification may be sought from “Kongzi shilun”. The answers will reinforce the conclusion that Confucius, or some Confucian scholars during the Warring States period had essentially adopted a sensual reading of the *Odes*; they did not censure human emotions and passions but proposed to hedge the excesses of *qing* with *li*.

1. The Entropy of *Shi* 詩 Interpretation

It has been noted in previous chapters that the interpretation of the *Odes* is a tradition as erratic as it is dogmatic. Abounding in the *Zuozhuan* 左傳 and the *Guoyu* 國語 are poetic lines cited to justify criticisms of political affairs and figures.¹⁵⁷ Poetry had been frequently quoted by the aristocrats during the Chunqiu period as a means of “expressing themselves with the elegance and discretion required in courtly speech” (Riegel 1997, 143). Excerpts of poetry, divorced from the meaning of the poems, were given new interpretations that depend on the linguistic contexts of the conversation at the time. They were *recherché* locution to ‘clarify’ (rather paradoxically, as poetry is often obscure) personal opinions or reinforce arguments. The verse “自求多福” (so shall you be seeking for much happiness) from “Wenwang” 文王 (Ode 235) (Legge 1994, 4:427) was quoted by Crown Prince Hu of Zheng 鄭太子忽 (circa 700 BCE) to justify his refusal of Lady Wen Jiang 文姜 being betrothed to him by the Marquis of Qi 齊襄公 (?-686 BCE). Prince Hu has appropriated the verse to mean ‘I’ll seek my own felicity’¹⁵⁸ from the poem that was originally meant to praise King Wen’s virtue for which he was awarded with the

¹⁵⁷ *Shi* quotations from the *Zuozhuan* and the *Guoyu* are too many to be enumerated here, details can be found in Zhu Jinfa’s 朱金發 monograph (Zhu 2007, 166-93). Also see Chen Zhi 2009, 249-50.

¹⁵⁸ See *Zuozhuan*: the sixth year of Duke Huan 左傳桓公六年.

mandate of heaven to rule. The popular use of poetry by the elites as part of their common language indicates that the *Odes* had been widely studied by the upper class before and during the Chunqiu and Warring States periods.¹⁵⁹

Although Confucius took the teaching of the *Odes* seriously, there are only about fourteen passages in the *Analects* in which the *Odes* have been quoted or mentioned. Of these fragmentary discourses, only six contain verses but their meanings differ from their original contexts; the rest are comments on poetry in general.¹⁶⁰ As previously noted, Confucius' discussion of poetry with Zixia 子夏, premised on female beauty but concluding on the essence of *li*, does not seek to explore the meaning of the poem but to elucidate an entirely different point. This interpretive strategy is consistent throughout the *Analects* where poetry has been quoted.¹⁶¹

As a staunch supporter of Confucius, Mencius took up the Ru torch of *shi* didacticism. In the *Mencius* some twenty-four passages are found to have discussed or cited ode verses, most of which serve to underscore Mencius' rhetoric rather than explicating the meaning of the poems. On one occasion Mencius critiques "Xiaopian" 小弁 (Ode 197) and "Kaifeng" 凱風 (Ode 32) by superimposing a layer of normative meaning of bad sonship on the poetry.¹⁶² Having laid down the principles of interpretation,¹⁶³ Mencius often derogates from his own rules by taking poetry out of context. His whimsical manipulation of the odes is evident in his justifying King Xuan of Qi's (齊宣王 ?-301 BCE) love of money and women by quoting "Gongliu" 公劉 (Ode 250) and "Mian" 緜 (Ode 237).¹⁶⁴ "Gongliu" is a poem praising Duke Liu's 公劉 (an early Zhou chieftain, dates uncertain) feat of

¹⁵⁹ As recorded in "Wangzhi" of the *Liji* 禮記·王制: "樂正...順先王詩書禮樂以造士" (The director of Music ... prescribes the curricula of poetry, history, rituals, and music of the former kings, for educating its scholars – my translation) (Lau 1992a, 35).

¹⁶⁰ The odes quoted in the *Analects* are found in these passages: in 2.2 Confucius quoted Ode 297 and in 3.2, Ode 282. In The *Analects* 1.15 Zigong quoted Ode 55; in 3.8 Zixia quoted Ode 57, and in 8.3 Zengzi quoted Ode 195. Lines from a purportedly lost ode were anonymously quoted in 9.31. "Guanju" (Ode 1) has been mentioned twice by title: in 3.20 and 8.15, but both might relate to the music.

¹⁶¹ Another example of extra-contextual application of ode excerpts is found in the *Analects* 1.15. Zigong's quotation of "如切如磋、如琢如磨" (Like bone cut, like horn polished, / Like jade carved, like stone ground) from "Qiyu" 淇奥 Ode 55 won Confucius' praise for his ability to elicitate (Lau 1992b, 6-7).

¹⁶² See *Mencius* 6.B.3 (Lau 2003, 266-7). "Kongzi shilun" glosses "Xiaobian" as depicting the harm caused by traducers (slip 8). Fang Yurun reads "Kaifeng" as a pious son's self-criticism (Fang 1986, 130).

¹⁶³ See the 'Theoretical Framework' section in Chapter 1.

¹⁶⁴ See *Mencius* 1.B.5 (Lau 2003, 38-9).

establishing a new capital. The lines “迺場迺疆、迺積迺倉” (He stocked and stored, / He placed the provisions / In bags and sacks) (Legge 1994, 4:483) actually depict his garnering up provisions for the campaign rather than the love of money. “Mian” exalts Duke Danfu’s 亶父 (grandfather of King Wen, dates uncertain) meritorious leadership in resettling his clan at Qishan 岐山. The lines “爰及姜女、聿來胥宇” (He brought with him the Lady Jiang, / Looking for a suitable abode) (Legge 1994, 4:438) quoted by Mencius have not the slightest suggestion of lechery.

The Warring States tomb manuscripts, such as those from the Mawangdui and the Guodian corpora, are also well stocked with ode citations. According to Liao Mingchun, a total of 23 ode excerpts are found within 21 out of the 23 chapters of the Guodian “Ziyi” 緇衣; seven out of the 28 chapters of “Wuxing” 五行 contain *Shi* quotations. Both “Ziyi” and “Wuxing” continued the practice of quoting poetry to reinforce their normative assertions. The poems “Yanyan” 燕燕 (Ode 28) and “Caochong” 草蟲 (Ode 14) have been discussed in two of the chapters in “Wuxing” (the “Yanyan” discursive has been examined in detail in the previous chapter of this thesis).¹⁶⁵ Liao makes the point that both discourses explain the poems (2000a, 42). It is my contention that they are no different to the other “Wuxing” discourses in that the two poems are appropriated to expound dogmatic concepts rather than to explicate the poetry: “Yanyan” espouses the idea of self-critique or self-sufficiency (*shendu* 慎獨), a theme which can hardly be read from the poem as explained in the last chapter. In the Wuxing discourse “Caochong” lines have been paraphrased to elucidate the concepts of *ren* 仁 (benevolence), *zhi* 智 (wisdom) and *sheng* 聖 (sagacity) (Liao 2000, 42-4; Csikszentmihalyi 2004, 282-4). Other manuscripts of the Guodian corpus, namely: “Xing Zi Ming Chu” 性自命出, “Liu de” 六德 (Six virtues) and “Yucong” 語叢 do not so much quote ode lines but explicate the notions of *shi* 詩 and *zhi* 志 (Liao 2000a, 46-9).¹⁶⁶ These general concepts have been discussed in Chapters 1 and 2.

¹⁶⁵ The discussion of “Yanyan” in Chapter 4 is based on the silk text of “Wuxing” rather than the bamboo text of “Wuxing” from Guodian; their textual variations do not materially affect the argument presented.

¹⁶⁶ Liao points out that fragmentary discussions on the *Shi* appear in other Mawangdui manuscripts but they appear to be of minor significance. Also see Ogino Tomonori 荻野友范 2007, 393-7 for commentaries on the *Shi* from the few manuscripts of the Guodian and Shangbo corpora.

In fact the Guodian “Ziyi” is basically the same as the “Ziyi” chapter of the *Liji* 禮記, save some minor textual variations. The *Liji*, traditionally attributed to Confucius’ grandson Zisi 子思 and Zisi’s followers, is another prolific source of ode quotations. Nearly ninety such citations are found in the canon; in some cases couplets from more than one poem are quoted to support an argument. These fragmentary records contain discussions of *shi* by the author(s) and other Confucian followers. Using the odes outside their original contexts had by then become a convention. Other than those citations, *Shi* has been mentioned in passing about a dozen times.

About half a century junior to Mencius, Xunzi is seen to have made more use of the *Odes* in his didactics. In the *Xunzi* there are no less than seventy passages in which lines from the *Odes* have been quoted and about ten passages in which the *Ode* have been mentioned. Xunzi carried on the practice of quoting odes to buttress normative arguments. For four times Xunzi has quoted lines from “Shijiu” (Ode 152), but his interpretations, *ad hoc* as they are, befit the contexts of his discursive.¹⁶⁷

The study of the *Odes* revived after the dark age of Qin. Xunzi is hailed as a key transmitter of the *shi* scholarship to the Mao 毛, Han 韓 and Lu 魯 schools, which were three of the four schools (the fourth school was the Qi 齊) of the Han dynasty.¹⁶⁸ The *Hanshi waizhuan* 韓詩外傳 is known to be redolent of Xunzi’s ideology (Zhu Jinfa 2007, 301-2). As previously observed, the Mao prefaces ascribes most of the poems to the panegyrics (*mei* 美) on the virtues of the sovereigns and their consorts, or satires (*ci* 刺) on their depravity. Though the Han, Lu and Qi traditions are no longer extant, Wang Xianqian 王先謙 (1842-1917) has collected remnants of them, so has Han Ying 韓嬰 (circa 200 BCE) for the *Hanshi* in the *Hanshi waizhuan*. However, instead of explicating the odes, Han Ying tells his own

¹⁶⁷ See *Xunzi* 1.6 “An Exhortation to Learning” 勸學: the lines “尸鳩在桑，其子七兮。淑人君子，其儀一兮。其儀一兮，心如結兮” are quoted to underline the concept of the constancy of the *junzi* (Knoblock 1988, 1:139. In 10.14 of “On Enriching the State” 富國, the lines “淑人君子，其儀不忒；其儀不忒，正是四國” are quoted to expound the *junzi*’s ambition to unite the states (Knoblock 1988, 2:137). In 15.2 of “Debate on the Principles of Warfare” 議兵, the couplet “淑人君子，其儀不忒” is quoted to explain the point that the virtue of the *junzi* will attract submission from the people (Knoblock 2:228). The quotation of 10.14 is repeated in 24.5 “On the Gentleman” 君子 in an attempt to elucidate the point that the modest and able *junzi* will be honoured in the world (Knoblock 1988, 3:168). These are justifiable interpretations within the linguistic contexts of the poetic lines as excerpts and Xunzi’s discursive.

¹⁶⁸ See Lu Ji 陸璣 *Mao shi cao mu niao shou chong yu shu* 毛詩草木花鳥蟲魚疏 (A Glossary on the fauna, flora, insects and fish in the *Maoshi*).

stories, garnishing their morals with the odes. For instance in Chapter 3 of volume 1, Confucius and Zigong 子貢 are seen piquing a maiden of Chu with a view to seeing her reaction. She replies to her beguilers most properly according to the rules of propriety. The story ends with four verses from “Hanguang” 漢廣: “南有喬木，不可休息。漢有游女，不可求思” (see translation and annotation of slip 13. The poem refers to abstinence from the pursuit of unreachable nuptial targets). This story has been considered vile by many Confucian scholars who would wish to have it deleted (Xu 2009, 5). In Chapter 16 of volume 1, Han quoted “鐘鼓樂之” (its original meaning is: “With bells and drums let us show our delight in her”) from “Guanju” to describe the ceremonious sounding of the bells on the Son of Heaven’s attending or retiring from levee. The *Hanshi Waizhuan* is more a handbook of examples of using poetic lines than a commentary on poetic meaning.

In a similar vein to the *Hanshi waizhuan*, Liu Xiang’s 劉向 *Lie nü zhuan* 烈女傳, a collection of stories of virtuous women and *femme fatales*, is equally liberal in appropriating the *Odes*. Ban Gu 班固 (32-92 CE) notes in “Chuyuanwang zhuan” in the *Hanshu* 漢書·楚元王傳 that Liu Xian wrote *Lie nü zhuan* by adopting the stories of virtuous and evil women told in the *Odes* and other canonical texts in order to admonish the emperor (向…採取詩書所載賢妃貞婦，興國顯家可法則，及孽嬖亂亡者，序次為列女傳，凡八篇，以戒天子). *Lie nü zhuan* is another example of creative use of the *Odes* by Han scholars.

Apart from appropriating poetry for rhetorical or didactic purposes, the pre-Qin and Han classics also discuss the cluster of *shi* concepts in terms of its formation and functionality.¹⁶⁹ The *Kongcongzi* contains a passage that comments on individual poems in a similar style to “Kongzi shilun” (See annotation of “Mugua” 木瓜, slip 18). Such commentary is rarely found in other canonical texts.

¹⁶⁹ Almost all discussions on the generality of poetry are of the same idea, typically, ‘poetry expresses purpose’ with minor variations: “詩言志” (“Yaodian” in the *Shangshu* 尚書堯·典); “詩以言志” (“27th Year of Duke Xian” of the *Zuo zhuan* 左傳·襄公二十七年); “詩言其志也” (“Kongzi xianju” in the *Liji* 禮記·孔子閒居); “詩所以合意” (“Luyu” in the *Guoyu* 國語·魯語); “詩所以會古今之志” (“Yucong 1” 語叢一, slip 38-9); etc. On the formation of poetry: “詩、書、禮、樂，其始出皆於人…” (The Odes, the Documents, the Rites, and the Music were all initially produced by men ... (“Xing zi ming chu” slip 15-6; translation by Shirley Chan 2009, 375); “詩由敬作” (Poetry is written out of reverence) (“Yucong 1” 語叢一, slip 95).

After the Han the *shi* commentarial tradition mainly swayed between arguments for and against the Mao prefaces, or simply put, between the moral-political and sensual-aesthetic readings of the *Odes*. Though the foregoing account on the interpretive tradition of the *Odes* is brief, the trend is clear: during pre-Han times the *Odes* had been used as a footnote to underline a point: the Chunqiu elites quoted them to express personal opinions, or for reasons of courtesy, to adumbrate a wish or criticism. Confucius quoted them to expound his teachings; Mencius quoted them to convince his interlocutors; Xunzi quoted them to propagate his ideology; the Han clerisy quoted them to promote their moral-political agenda. In the meantime only the Mao tradition of the four schools has survived to become the mainstream commentarial framework to which layers of exegeses have been added, and beneath which the unalloyed meanings of the poems lay.

Although the Han commentarial tradition has forged a template on which subsequent interpretations of the *Odes* are based, scholars of later times have tried to penetrate the political and normative impastos with which Han commentators have painted over the *Odes*. They have managed to re-delineate some of the poems, but have not ventured far beyond the normative interpretations of the Han tradition. It was not until the twentieth century that the commentarial tradition broke free from the moralistic shackles. On the other hand “Kongzi shilun” stands out among the pre-Qin and Han bibliotheca as a monographic commentary on the *Odes*. It is more comprehensive than the fragmentary *shi* citations found in the extant classics, which are strictly speaking not exegeses of the odes *per se*. Inquires into the Han scholarship would, by way of comparison, reveal the distinctive approach of “Kongzi shilun” to interpreting the *Odes*, to which the following discussions are devoted.

2. The Sensual and the Moral

The critical perspective of “Kongzi shilun” is a topic of interest to scholars for revealing Confucius’ poetic didacticism. Cao Jianguo asserts that seven poems have been elucidated by Confucius from the viewpoint of *zhi* 智/知 (sagacity) (2010, 102-11). Although Cao’s research into the idea of sagacity is most perceptive, how that notion translates into explaining some of the poems seems to be strained.¹⁷⁰ Liao

¹⁷⁰ According to Cao, “Hanguang” shows sagacity in knowing what is achievable; “Datian”, by way of abiding by the rites; “Xishuai”, by way of acting appropriately according to the doctrine of the

Mingchun affirms that Confucius’ critical angles are *cheng*, 誠 (sincerity), *tianming* 天命 (heaven’s mandate), and *li* but they apply to specific rather than the majority of the poems (2004a, 25-56).¹⁷¹ Ikeda Tomohisa reviews the notion of *li* in “Kongzi shilun” in relation to extant and excavated texts but in particular to the ideology of Xunzi (2006, 376-402). Liu Xinfang’s exposition of the thematic elements of *xing* 性 (which, in Liu’s model, subsumes *qing* and *ai* 愛 love), *li*, *ming* and *zhi* 知 of the manuscript provides a wide range of exophoric references (extant and excavated texts) (2003, 49-64). Whilst all these scholarly insights into the metaphysical import of these concepts are inspiring, it appears that *qing* as the dominant theme of the poems and the element that germinates poetry have not received the detailed attention that it deserves.

2.1. The Epimyth of the Moral

Within the context of poetry, sensuality and morality are the two notions that have long fascinated intellectuals in the East and West. Early Western philosophers regarded emotions in poetry to be the antithesis of truth, reality and morality. In *The Republic* written as a Socratic dialogue, Plato broaches the “old quarrel between philosophy and poetry”. He esteems philosophy because it engages in reasons but denigrates poetry as it invokes the unreal (imagination) and incites the wrong emotions (Plato III, 392c-403c; X, 595a-608b). Chinese poetry has all these ‘vices’ of Greek poetry, as it is inspirational, imaginative and emotional. Yet unlike that of its Hellenic counterpart, the esteem in which poetry has been held by the Chinese is beyond question. Whilst Plato’s criticism of poetry is focused on its lack of morality (Elias 1984, 3), Chinese exegetes hold that poetry is saturated with it. But to Plato, reasons reign supreme; to the Chinese, emotions can be versed in morality. As already noted in Chapter 1, the concepts of emotions and morality are mentioned in the “Great preface”. It is proposed to re-visit the discourse here in order to trace its shift in exegetical emphasis from emotions to morality:

mean, “Qiang youci”, by way of its disclosure of secrets which is regarded as not sagacious, but Cao’s commentary on “Qingying”, “Juaner” (Ode 3) and “Heshui” 河水 (a lost poem) appears strained.

¹⁷¹ Liao explicates “Wanger” 皇矣 (Ode 241) in terms of *tianming* and *cheng*, “Mugua”, “Weiyang” 渭陽 (Ode 134), “Datian” and “Luming” in terms of *li*.

情動於中，而形於言 … 情發於聲，聲成文謂之音。¹⁷²

The feelings move inwardly, and are embodied in words ... The feelings go forth in sounds. When those sounds are artistically combined, we have what we called musical pieces.

Unfortunately, instead of taking the idea of *qing* further the discourse digresses to the functionality of poetry as a political index:

治世之音安以樂，其政和 … 亡國之音哀以思，其民困。

The style of such pieces in an age of good order is quiet, going on to be joyful ... when a State is going to ruin, is mournful.

Furthermore, the agitprop masquerades as a moralistic homily:

先王以是經夫婦，成孝敬，厚人倫，美教化，移風俗。

The former kings by this regulated the duties of husband and wife, effectually inculcated filial obedience and reverence, secured attention to all the relations of society, adorned the transforming influence of instruction, and transformed manners and customs. (Legge 1994, 4. 34)]

Whilst poetry does reflect the ethos including the socio-political situations of the time, the proclivity of the Han orthodoxy for political and moral interpretations of the *Odes* has muzzled the voice of sensuality, which has made a brief debut and then been relegated to the back stage, if not into gelid oblivion, as the Mao preface continues with its platitude:

故變風，發乎情，止乎禮義，發乎情，民之性也，止乎禮義，先王之澤也。

Thus emotions were the issue of the “Changed Airs” but they did not step outside the rules of propriety and righteousness. Emotional expressions are in the nature of the people; that they should not go beyond the rules was from the beneficent influence of the former kings.

(Legge 1994, 4.36]; modified)

Having identifying *qing* as the motivation for poetic creativity, the Han clerisy shied away from explicating the idea but shifted to the paradigmatic interpretive stance of treating the odes as a pedagogic tool of the sage kings to instruct and transform the people. What it eschewed in terms of *qing* it has made up more than adequately with the notion of *li*.

In the Confucian tradition the concepts of *li* and *shi* are intertwined. As noted previously, Confucius is emphatic on the study of *shi* for it enables proper speech

¹⁷² The idea of *yin* 音 includes poetry; see footnote 18.

and the *li* for proper deportment (不學詩，無以言，不學禮無以立 – *Analects* 16.13; Lau 1992, 167). The other side of the same coin is that:

不能詩，於禮繆。(禮記·仲尼燕居) (Lau 1992a, 137)

[If one] is not versed in the *Odes* one will not act properly according to *li*.
 (“Zhongni at home at ease” of the *Liji*, my translation)

Also,

志之所至，詩亦至焉。詩之所至，禮亦至焉。(禮記·孔子閒居)
 (Lau 1992a, 138)

Whatever purposiveness¹⁷³ the mind engages, the *Book of Odes* likewise engages; whatever the *Odes* expresses, propriety also embodies.

(“Confucius at home at leisure” of the *Liji*, my translation)

As part of Confucius’ ideology *li* and *ren* 仁 are coherent core values. The concepts have been well documented in canonical texts: “克己復禮為仁” (To return to the observance of the rites through overcoming the self constitutes benevolence – *Analects* 12.1); “人而不仁，如何禮?” (What can a man, who is not benevolent, do with the rites? – *Analects* 3.3; Lau 2002, 108-9, 18-9; modified). If *ren* represents the metaphysical ideal, then *li*, through overcoming the self and acting harmoniously with others, is the praxis of that profound abstraction. Thus *Shi* finds expression in *li*, through which *ren* is attained.

Confucius has always affirmed the pedagogic effect of the *Odes*, as he considers gentle and sincere deportment to be the result of *shi* instructions.¹⁷⁴ The Han commentators have also recognized the transformative effect of the *Shi*. However, the effect of poetry is different from the essence of poetry. Confucius has never said that the *Book of Odes* is a handbook of good conduct, or that it should be read as such. But that appears to be what the Han scholars have done, collapsing the notions of effect into essence and interpreted the poems as if they should be read as codes of ethics. Although the Han, Lu and Qi *shi* traditions are no longer existent, from the exegetical fragments that Wang Xianqian has gathered, the moral readings that these schools had once espoused together with those propounded in the received *Maoshi* would make interesting comparison with “Kongzi shilun”, as shown in Table 7 below (Legge 1994; Wang Xianqian 1987):

¹⁷³ As rendered by Chen Shih-hsiang (1951, 57)

¹⁷⁴ See “Jingji” of the *Liji* 禮記·經解: “溫柔敦厚，詩教也。” (Lau 1992a, 133)

Table 7 - Comparison of Poetic Themes

Ode No.	Title	“Kongzi Shilun”	Maoshi 毛詩	Hanshi 韓詩	Lushi 魯詩	Qishi 齊詩
1	Guanju 關雎	<i>li</i> transcends sexual desires	the virtues of the queen and consorts	satire on current affairs: king should not indulge in sexual desires	remonstrates King Kong of Zhou 周康王 and queen for rising late; only virtuous women should match the king	deportment of the queen as model, worthy of worship in the ancestral temple
2	Gedan 葛覃	ancestral veneration	the natural disposition of the queen and consorts	--	warning not to miss nobility	--
4	Jiumu 樛木	blessedness of heaven received by <i>Junzi</i>	the queen's condescension to the king's seraglio	same as <i>Maoshi</i>	same as <i>Maoshi</i>	same as <i>Maoshi</i>
7	Tuju 兔置	endorses the people employed	transforming influence of the queen, resulting in numerous men of virtue and talent	King Wen appoints Shang 商 worthies	--	--
9	Hanguang 漢廣	not to pursue unreachable targets	praising King Wen's influence on the people of the southern states	same as <i>Maoshi</i>	same as <i>Maoshi</i>	same as <i>Maoshi</i>
12	Quechao 鵲巢	generosity of <i>li</i>	the virtue of the prince's wife	same as <i>Maoshi</i>	same as <i>Maoshi</i>	same as <i>Maoshi</i>
16	Gantang 甘棠	venerating ancestral temple/authority	praising Shao Bo's 召伯 benevolent governance	same as <i>Maoshi</i>	same as <i>Maoshi</i>	same as <i>Maoshi</i>
26	Bozhou 柏舟	melancholy	virtuous officers neglected by Duke Qing of Wei 衛傾公	praising Lady Xuan of Wei's 衛宣夫人 virtue insisting on her widowhood	virtuous men being neglected	--
27	Lüyi 綠衣	remembrance of lost one	the plaint of Lady Jiang of Wei 衛姜, her position usurped by a concubine	--	--	same as <i>Maoshi</i>

Ode No.	Title	“Kongzi Shilun”	Maoshi 毛詩	Hanshi 韓詩	Lushi 魯詩	Qishi 齊詩
28	Yanyan 燕燕	whole-heartedness and sincerity of love	Lady Jiang of Wei escorting a concubine returning to her home state	Ding Jiang 's (head wife) farewell to a concubine	Lady Ding Jiang bidding her widowed daughter-in-law farewell	a farewell song: swallows flying to the sea, no historical figures named
35	Gufeng 谷風	grief	Wei people influenced by their superiors, indulged with new matches, neglecting old wives	--	--	--
41	Beifeng 北風	grief	Wei people running away from cruel oppression	--	same as <i>Qishi</i>	satirizes Wei people escaping from oppression
46	Qiang youci 牆有茨	secretive talks that cannot be divulged	satirizes the incestuous Lady Xuan of Wei 衛宣夫人 and Prince Wan 頑	satirizes Duke Xuan of Wei 衛宣公	same as <i>Hanshi</i>	the upheavals of the three generations of Xuan 宣, Wei 惠 and Yi 懿 of Wei 衛
52	Xiangshu 相鼠	intense animosity	Duke Wen of Wei 衛文公 corrected impertinent officers	--	the wife admonishing the husband	--
64	Mugua 木瓜	not to be remiss with the <i>li</i> of giving gifts	praises Duke Huan of Qi 齊桓公 for saving Di 狄 and giving generously to the people	--	the officers repaying their lord's kindness	--
67	Junzi yangyang 君子陽陽	about petty men	expressive of pity for Zhou, officers inviting one another and keep away from harm	same as <i>Maoshi</i>	same as <i>Maoshi</i>	same as <i>Maoshi</i>
68	Yang zhi shui 揚之水	ardent love of one's wife	satirizes King Ping 平 for sending his people to guard his mother's country	same as <i>Maoshi</i>	same as <i>Maoshi</i>	same as <i>Maoshi</i>

Ode No.	Title	“Kongzi Shilun”	Maoshi 毛詩	Hanshi 韓詩	Lushi 魯詩	Qishi 齊詩
70	Tuyuan 兔爰	man born into an inappropriate era	harshness in life as the states revolted against King Huan of Zhou 周桓王	same as <i>Maoshi</i>	same as <i>Maoshi</i>	same as <i>Maoshi</i>
72	Caige 采芣	love of one's wife	fear of calumniators during King Huan's time	same as <i>Maoshi</i>	same as <i>Maoshi</i>	same as <i>Maoshi</i>
76	Jiang zhon zi 將仲子	being in awe of gossips	satirizes Duke Zhuang's 莊公 disorderly household	same as <i>Maoshi</i>	same as <i>Maoshi</i>	same as <i>Maoshi</i>
87	Qianchang 褰裳	resoluteness	people of one state wished a bigger state to step in to rectify the disorder of their state	--	--	--
98	Zhe 著	bridegroom	satirizes current affairs	same as <i>Maoshi</i>	same as <i>Maoshi</i>	same as <i>Maoshi</i>
100	Dongfang weiming 東方未明	sharp words of criticism	satirizes the loss of rules of propriety among the people and rulers	same as <i>Maoshi</i>	same as <i>Maoshi</i>	same as <i>Maoshi</i>
106	Yijie 猗嗟	single-mindedness	satirizes Duke Zhuang's inability to restrain his incestuous mother, despite his dignity and skills	same as <i>Maoshi</i>	same as <i>Maoshi</i>	same as <i>Maoshi</i>
114	Xishuai 蟋蟀	recognizing the difficulty of life	satirizes Duke Xi of Jin 晉僖公 for his economy but violating <i>li</i>	--	[indiscriminate] frugality is undesirable	the <i>junzi</i> economizes but resents [excessive] frugality
124	Gesheng 角 [葛生]	a woman longing for her husband	satirizes Duke Xian of Jin 晉獻公 for waging war causing loss of life	same as <i>Maoshi</i>	same as <i>Maoshi</i>	same as <i>Maoshi</i>
136	Wanqiu 宛丘	sincerity, no trickery	satirizes Duke You 幽公 for indulging in sensual pleasure	--	--	slightly different to <i>Maoshi</i>

Ode No.	Title	“Kongzi Shilun”	Maoshi 毛詩	Hanshi 韓詩	Lushi 魯詩	Qishi 齊詩
148	Xiyou changchu 隰有長楚	regrets one's procession	people disgust at dissoluteness of the lewd ruler	same as <i>Maoshi</i>	same as <i>Maoshi</i>	same as <i>Maoshi</i>
152	Shijiu 鳴鳩	truthful to one partner	satirizes disloyalty	same as <i>Maoshi</i>	same as <i>Maoshi</i>	same as <i>Maoshi</i>
161	Luming 鹿鳴	the insatiable desire for virtue	festal song of the lord entertaining his ministers	same as <i>Maoshi</i>	censures the ruler's indulgence in enjoyment but neglecting the worthies	same as <i>Maoshi</i>
165	Famu 伐木	not about being self-critical	entertaining friends; the ruler's affection will make people harmonious and virtuous	laments the loss of friendship	satire on the decline of Zhou	--
166	Tianbao 天保	unlimited fortune bestowed upon the king	the ministers gratefully respond to their sovereign	same as <i>Maoshi</i>	same as <i>Maoshi</i>	same as <i>Maoshi</i>
169	Didu 杕杜	having to leave one's beloved for the king's business	congratulates the men on their return	same as <i>Qishi</i>	same as <i>Qishi</i>	regrets prolonged posting away from home
174	Zhanlu 湛露	praises offered without hesitation	the Son of Heaven entertaining the feudal princes	same as <i>Maoshi</i>	same as <i>Maoshi</i>	same as <i>Maoshi</i>
176	Jingjing zhi e 菁菁者莪	benefit received from befriending virtuous people	rejoice at the nourishment of talent	same as <i>Lushi</i>	instruction of talent	same as <i>Lushi</i>
185	Qifu 祈父	accusations with valid reasons	censures King Xuan	censures Qifu	censures Qifu	regrets at not being able to look after one's mother

Ode No.	Title	“Kongzi Shilun”	Maoshi 毛詩	Hanshi 韓詩	Lushi 魯詩	Qishi 齊詩
187	Huangniao 黃鳥	hardship faced in an alien country	censures King Xuan 宣王	--	--	remembering one's parents and country
191	Jie nanshan 節南山	depravities of the ruling class considered vile	Jiafu 家父 censures King You 幽王	--	--	satirizes the officers of Zhou during its decline on their contending for profits and land
193	Shiyu zhijiao 十月之交	artful criticism	a great officer censures King You	similar to <i>Maoshi</i>	similar to <i>Maoshi</i>	similar to <i>Maoshi</i>
194	Yu wu zhen 雨無正	depravities of the ruling class considered vile	a great officer censures King You	censures King Li for his numerous improper edicts	similar to <i>Hanshi</i>	similar to <i>Hanshi</i>
195	Xiaomin 小旻	skeptical of the integrity of policy makers	a great officer expresses his condemnation of King You	--	--	--
196	Xiaowan 小宛	not invective, expresses trepidation	a great officer expresses his condemnation of King You	--	--	--
197	Xiaobian 小弁	the harm caused by traducers	a tutor of the king's eldest son satirizing King You	--	Boqi 伯奇 (Yin Jifu's 尹吉甫 son) lamenting banishment by his father	laments the harm done by traducer to the righteous
198	Qiaoyan 巧言	the harm caused by traducers	a great officer, suffering from slanders, satirizes King Li 厲王	--	--	officers in trouble, the <i>junzi</i> confounded by malicious statements
202	Liao e 蓼莪	filial piety	people and officers toiled, unable to look after parents, satirize King You	similar to <i>Maoshi</i>	--	similar to <i>Maoshi</i>

Ode No.	Title	“Kongzi Shilun”	Maoshi 毛詩	Hanshi 韓詩	Lushi 魯詩	Qishi 齊詩
206	Wu jian dache 無將大車	feeling helpless	a great officer regrets at having advanced men to office	--	--	censure King Li
212	Datian 大田	final stanza depicts ruler instructing people through <i>li</i> in action	censures King You, as the poor and widows could not preserve themselves	--	--	--
235	Wenwang 文王	King Wen in heaven	King Wen received the appointment [of Heaven] and founded Zhou	similar to <i>Maoshi</i>	similar to <i>Maoshi</i>	similar to <i>Maoshi</i>
236	Daming 大明	King Wen was appointed because of his sincerity	King Wen possessed illustrious virtue, Heaven repeated its appointment to King Wu	--	--	--
241	Huanf yi 皇矣	providential mandate given to King Wen	praises the House of Zhou and the virtue of King Wen	similar to <i>Maoshi</i>	similar to <i>Maoshi</i>	similar to <i>Maoshi</i>
266	Qingmiao 清廟	the numerous officers adopting King Wen's virtue	a song for offering sacrifice to King Wen when the Duke of Zhou received the feudal princes	--	similar to <i>Maoshi</i>	--
269	Liewan 烈文	the virtues of King Wen	a song used at the accession of King Cheng, when the princes assisted him in sacrifice	similar to <i>Lushi</i>	praises ancestral kings and dukes in sacrifices	similar to <i>Lushi</i>
271	Haotian you chengming 昊天有成命	Kings Wen and Wu's richly endowed by Heaven	a song used at the border sacrifice to Heaven and Earth	similar to <i>Maoshi</i>	similar to <i>Maoshi</i>	--

As shown in the above table, the four schools are unanimous in glossing the *song* and *daya* poems (Ode 235 to 271) as ceremonial paeans exalting the deified sage kings. In “Kongzi shilun” Confucius has not commented explicitly on their meaning, but from his expression of delight in these poems he would not have interpreted them differently. In commenting on the other poems the four schools are remarkably different from “Kongzi shilun” in that they anchor almost every poem on a historical incident, though the particular incident or the personae involved may vary from school to school. In some cases their interpretations are diametrical; for instance, in reading “Guanju” the *Maoshi* and the *Qishi* heap praises on the queen’s virtues but the *Hanshi* and the *Lushi* interpret it as a satire on the king’s and queen’s debauchery. Kern questions the exegetical value of the Mao prefaces in regard to the interpretation of “Kongzi shilun” and other excavated texts (2008, 253). There are valid reasons to doubt the moralistic reading of the *Maoshi*, with no lack of arguments advanced by scholars such as Ouyang Xiu, Zhu Xi, Fang Rurun, Hu Shi and Wen Yiduo etc; but it would be rash to suggest a sweeping denial of its interpretations. Some of *Maoshi*’s historical interpretations are no doubt strained, particularly those concerning the king’s harem and their virtues or the lack of them. But poems that portray historical situations should not be ruled out entirely, as poetry often reflects social and life situations. For example, Confucius considers “Beifeng” Ode 42 to be an expression of grief. The *Maoshi*, *Lushi* and *Qishi* gloss it as depicting the hardship of the Wei people, which does not go across the grain of Confucius’ interpretation; though the three schools have not produce evidence to support their specific historical reading.

As noted earlier, the didactic purposes of the *Odes* (the *feng* poems in particular) are to be achieved through reading them as praises or satires on the virtues or depravities of the sovereigns and their ladies. On the contrary Confucius focuses his attention on textual meaning; he has not explicitly imported any exophoric reference to his interpretation of the poetry.¹⁷⁵ His commentary is based on the notion of *qing* from which poetry is issued. If one would retrace the goodness of a thing to its origin, as Confucius said one would with clothing fabrics,¹⁷⁶ then the

¹⁷⁵ Fang Ming 方銘 claims that the Mao prefaces existed before “Kongzi shilun” and that the two discourses are coherent (2002, 33-6). I contend that their approaches are clearly different, as can be seen from Table 7. Their differences are irreconcilable (e.g. “Guanju”, “Hanguang” and “Mugua”). It appears that Fang’s arguments are ill substantiated.

¹⁷⁶ See annotations on “Getan”, slip 16.

epimyth of the moral is that when morality is read into the poetry, it should be retraced to the notion of *qing*.

2.2. The Algebra of the Sensual

The Chinese word *qing* is a polysemic word that needs definition; however a comprehensive investigation into its metaphysical import is outside the scope of this thesis, as “Kongzi shilun” is, after all, a commentary on poetry, not an essay about philosophy. *Sensu lato*, *qing* subsumes passions, desires, emotions, love, Eros, pathos, sentiments, cravings, feelings, and sensuality etc which can be used interchangeably sometimes according to the linguistic context. As discussed in Chapter 1 the graphs of *qing* and *zhi* eventually conflates into the binome 情志 (emotive ‘purposiveness’) and has been taken as the essence of poetic expression. Confucius rarely spoke of *qing* in the *Analects*. The few occasions on which he mentions *ai* 愛 (love), he uses the word in a charitable sense similar to ‘agape’, as in *ai ren* (愛人 love humankind) or *ai zhong* (愛眾 love fellow men), whose meanings shy away from notions of *Eros* or romantic love.¹⁷⁷ Likewise Mencius scarcely mentions *qing* but uses the word *ai* more liberally, sometimes interchangeably with *hao* (好 be fond of) and *bu she* (不捨 grudge).¹⁷⁸ As the topic of romantic love is scarcely found in the canons, it seems natural that the word *qing* has assumed other meanings. A.C. Graham claims that *qing* as a noun means ‘the facts’, or as an adjective, ‘genuine’ and as an adverb, ‘genuinely’ when they appear in pre-Han classical texts (1990, 59-65). According to Chad Hanson, *qing* can be defined as “reality feedback” or “reality input” (1995, 201). As Makeham points out, *qing* was synonymous with *shi* 實, which, for the purpose of distinguishing its meaning from ‘object/entity’, has been translated as ‘actuality’ (1991, 347). Graham’s evidence comes mainly from the *Xunzi* and the *Zhuangzi* (1990, 59-65). I might add that discourses from the *Analects* and the *Mencius* in which *qing* has been mentioned apparently support Graham’s claim:

¹⁷⁷ 論語・學而 *Analects* 1.5 “節用而愛人” (keep expenditure under proper regulation and love fellow men); 1.6 “汎愛眾而親人” ([One] should love the multitude and cultivate the friendship of his fellow men); 陽貨 17.4 “君子學道則愛人” (the gentleman instructed in the Way loves his fellow men); 17.21 “予也，有三年之愛於其父母乎?” (Was Yü not given three years’ love by his parents?) (Lau 1992b, 2-3, 170-1).

¹⁷⁸ 孟子・梁惠王上 *Mencius* 1.A.7: “我非愛其財” (It is not true that I grudged the expense); 梁惠王下 1.B.5: “寡人好貨 … …愛厥妃” (I am fond of money...loved his concubine) (Lau 2003, 16-7; 38-9).

上好信，則民莫敢不用情

When those above love trustworthiness, none of the common people will dare not show their true colours.

(論語・泰伯, *Analects* 8.4, Lau 1992b, 122-3)

如得其情，則哀矜而勿喜

If you succeed in extracting the truth from them, you should have compassion on them instead of feeling pleased with yourself.

(論語・子張, *Analects* 19.19; Lau 1992b, 194-5)

夫物之不齊，物之情也

That things are unequal is part of nature.

(孟子・滕文公上, *Mencius* 3.A.4; Lau 2003, 118-9)

故聲聞過情，君子恥之

Thus a gentleman is ashamed of an exaggerated reputation.

(孟子・離婁下, *Mencius* 4.B.18; Lau 2003, 178-9)

是豈人之情也哉

But can that be what a man is genuinely like?

(告子下, *Mencius* 6.A.8; Lau 2003, 250-1)

What is debatable, however, is Graham's generalization that "[although] the word *ch'ing* [*qing*] is common in pre-Han literature, [it] *never* (my italics) means 'passions', not even in the *Xunzi* where the later meaning has developed." (1990, 59) In fact Graham's interpretation of *qing* in the *Xunzi* 22.b (性之好、惡、喜、怒、哀、樂謂之情) is worthy of critical review. Knoblock's translation reads: "The feelings of liking and disliking, of delight and anger, and of sorrow and joy that are inborn in our nature are call 'emotions'" (1988, 3:127). For Graham the word 'emotions' in the above context should be replaced by 'facts' or "genuineness". Graham claims support from the doctrine of *zhengmin* (正名 rectification of names): what is "the *qing*" (facts) about X is "what is genuinely X in it" (Graham 1990, 63; Hanson 1995, 194). Be that as it may, a name or a referent carries with it no guarantee for singularity of meaning, as post-structuralists of the last century would readily argue. Graham's polemic of 'the facts about X' can be argued both ways. Xunzi, a nominalist though he was, who believed in the conventional nature of giving names to objects (Makeham 1991, 345), was quite prepared to name things arbitrarily. Just as the *Xunzi* 22.b has been collected in the tome entitled 正名 ("On the Correct Use of Names"), he might have intended to arbitrarily differentiate *qing*

the ‘facts’ from *qing* the ‘liking, disliking’ etc and calls it *qing* the ‘emotions’, as he states categorically in the preamble of this discourse: “[the] *various* (my italics) names of what is within man” (散名之在人者) (Knoblock 1988, 3:127). A similar discourse can be found in “Liyun” of the *Liji* 禮記·禮運: “何謂人情? 喜怒哀懼愛惡欲七者...故聖人所以治人七情” (What is *qing*? Delight, anger, sorrow, fear, love, disliking and liking – these seven ‘things’ ... Hence the sage rulers regulate these seven ‘things’) (Lau 1992a, 62). If these seven ‘things’ meant purely human ‘genuineness’ as Graham claims, then how and why should a sage ruler regulate them? Genuineness, *ipso facto*, will no longer be genuine once it has been regulated or tempered with.

. It appears that one cannot rule out the meaning of ‘passions’ (and all its denotations) from the word *qing* in pre-Han literature. More recent studies of the concept of *qing* in early Chinese literature reveal that it has a broad semantic range. Puett argues that *qing* includes such meanings as basic tendencies, inclinations, dispositions (including emotional dispositions), and fundamental qualities (2004, 42). A finer categorization is proposed by Harbsmeier: *qing* is what is factual (the basic facts of a matter), metaphysical (basic dynamic factors), political (popular sentiments or responses), Anthropological (basic instincts and propensities), positive (sensibilities and sentiments) and personal (basic motivation and attitude) (2004, 71). In the referential realm *qing* as ‘facts’ or ‘actuality’ is not necessarily the dichotomy of ‘passions’ or ‘emotions’, nor should they be mutually exclusive. As discussed in Chapter 1, the word 之 can mean stop or go. The original graphs of *shi* 詩 and *zhi* 志, which had been semantically interchangeable, would very likely have their distinct meanings represented by the same graph in ancient times. Xunzi’s definition of music is joy, both of which are represented by the same character 樂 (夫樂者、樂也) (Xunzi 20.1; Knoblock 1988, 3.80). My point is that the double meaning of a word is no stranger to pre-Han texts. As recorded in the Guodian manuscript “Xing zi ming chu”, *qing* is said to be born of *xing*: “情生於性”... “情由於性”. *Qing* is regarded in this Warring States text as emotional disposition or true inner feelings (S. Chan 2009, 372-3, 375). Andreini simply conflates the two: on the one hand, *qing* can be defined as ‘emotions, passions, feelings’, and on the other the idea of ‘real, true, genuineness’ (Andreini 2006, 151).

Qing and *xing* are complex and intertwined philosophical concepts. The author of “Xing zhi ming chu” understood *qing* not simply as the facts of an entity but as dynamic human emotions that respond to external stimuli (S. Chan 2009, 373). This is an alternative way of explaining the Western concept that an emotion has cognitive content, intentionality and direction “*about* something” (Bockover 1995, 164). Confucius has hardly ever discussed *xing*, at least it is not a topic on which his disciple Zigong 子貢 (520 – 446 BCE) has been instructed.¹⁷⁹ Both Mencius and Xunzi have propounded different treaties on *xing* but a detailed investigation in this regard would be going off on a tangent. Confucius has mentioned *minxing* 民性 three times in “Kongzi shilun” as he asserts that the veneration of one’s ancestors as depicted in “Getan”, the respect paid to the ancestral temple as seen in “Gantang”, and the rites of exchanging gifts portrayed in “Mugua”, are all ‘the *xing* of the people’ (民性固然 literally rendered) (slips 16, 24 and 20). Cao Fulin explores the concept of *minxing* in terms of gift giving basing on “Luming” (Ode 161) and glosses *xing* as human nature that craves for harmony (2005c, 114). I posit that *minxing* is a more complex concept than what Cao has propounded. For *minxing* to be interpreted within the context of “Kongzi shilun”, suffice it to quote Ames’s observation that human *xing* cannot be understood only as “an ahistorical ‘given’... a psychobiological starting point”, but also “an historically, culturally, and socially emergent definition of person” (1991, 143). In other words *xing*, in essence, it is not only an innate quality but also the result of cultivation and development; it is not merely about the self only but also the relation of the self with other things in terms of humanity. I posit that *minxing* in “Kongzi shilun” is not purely *xing* (nature), for whilst it may be an ahistorically ‘given’ or hardwired disposition, it does not, within their relative linguistic contexts, evince any sense of “emergent definition of person”. I hold that the notion overlaps with *qing* in that it has cognitive contents: the beauty of things in “Getan” (見其美, slip 16), the affection of Shao Gong in “Gantang” (邵公之愛, Slip 16), and the rites of sending gifts in “Mugua” (幣帛之禮). It also has intentionality and direction: in “Getan” it is the wish to trace beauty to its origin (欲反其本); in “Gantang” it is the love of a governor extended to his tree (思及其人，敬愛其樹); in “Mugua” it is the wish to express a covert desire (隱志必有以喻).

¹⁷⁹ 論語・公冶長 *Analects* 5.13: “... one cannot get to hear [the Master’s] views on human nature and the Way of Heaven.” (夫子之言性與天道，不可得而聞也) (Lau 1992b, 40-1).

Finally, “Getan” is about venerating one’s ancestors (祇初之志), “Gantang” about respecting the authority of governance (宗廟之敬), and “Mugua”, an enduring friendship (永以為好也). In all three cases, visceral sentiments are aroused by external stimuli: the luxuriant dolichos, the beautiful fabrics, the pear tree, the quince and jade pieces. Thus 民性 has been rendered in my translation as ‘emotional disposition’ instead of ‘nature’.

According to “Kongzi shilun” *qing* should have occupied the centre stage of the commentarial tradition. The rich meaning of human emotions that it embraces are rarely found in other pre-Qin and Han texts. The word *qing* 情 only appears six times in the manuscript, but the notion is pervasive throughout. Eros is a topic which Confucius has hardly discussed in extant texts but he points out in “Kongzi shilun” that the theme of “Yang Zhi Shui” and “Caige” is conjugal love (愛婦, slip 17). “Didu” is another poem depicting ardent love (其情至也 ... 離其所愛，必曰吾奚捨之, slip 27). “Yanyan”, as discussed in Chapter 4, is more likely to be about amorous than kinship love. “Wanqiu” can be read in a number ways, one of which considers it to be a love song between a man and a priestess (slip 22). The most sensual reading is none other than “Guanju” in that sexual desire is openly discussed (slip 14); and to a lesser degree “Hanguang” (slip 15), in which Confucius diverts sensual desires to the cynosure of propriety (以色喻於禮) and wisdom (知恆).

Where *qing* is meant to be feelings or emotions, “Getan” and “Gantang” are explained in terms of venerating ancestors and respecting benevolent authority. “Mugua” expresses the covert yearning for enduring friendship, which Confucius uses as an example to elucidate the rites of offering gifts. “Lüyi” is a poem about remembering a lost one (slip 16). “Liao e” is about filial piety (slip 26). “Yu wu zhen” and “Jie nan shan” are expressive of scepticism (slip 8); “Xiao wan” speaks of agitation; “Xiaobian” and “Qiaoyan” are spiteful of traducers (slip 8). “Xiyong changchu” is about one’s regret of being burdened by one’s possession (slip 26); “Xiangshu” is about intense animosity (slip 28); not to mention the resentment of “Beimen”, the emotional fissure of choosing among pleasure, frugality and official duty as expressed in “Xishuai” (slip 27), the sorrow of “Bozhau” in the “Beifeng”, the melancholy of “Gufeng” which is rich in sentiments of betrayal or grief and to a lesser extent disgrace and fear (slip 26). These poems have been explored in the light of the broad sense of *qing* in Chapters 3 and 4.

Confucius' exposition of *qing* goes deeper than just identifying the feelings or the moods of the poems. When he speaks of love in the poems a sense of gradation can be inferred. In his commentary on "Hanguang" he advises against courting the rambling Han girls as they are practically unreachable; his endorsement on the unfruitful love of "Yanyan" seems to have ruffled his own purport. In "Hanguang" Confucius warns of unwitting courtship, appealing to the logos of the young men who may have impractical nuptial targets. Confucius' advice is well-meant: it is better to quell the sparks of desire before they flare into flames of love. On the other hand, he recognizes from "Yanyan" that the impetuous blaze of love, once ignited, cannot be easily extinguished. The truthfulness and devotion of such love, though impractical, is nonetheless a noble human emotion. According to Confucius the ultimate in *qing* are truthfulness and dedication which is a common thread through "Wanqiu", "Yanyan" and Shijiu.

"Hanguang" and "Yanyan" may seem to be bring different morals to bear but common to them is the motif of spatial separation on which Confucius' logos for the former and pathos for the latter hang. The breadth of River Han (漢之廣) is a physical barrier that is impossible to cross, the acknowledgement of which is the immutable truth (知恆). The spatial separation (遠送于野，瞻望弗及) in "Yanyan" is not only emotionally charged (that is, a sense of emotional inaccessibility) but is also foreshadowing the containment of *qing* within the rules of propriety: the physical distance kept is symbolic of the emotional separation required by *li*, now that the poet's lover is someone's wife and he must from then onwards perish the thought of love for her in solitude. The double meaning of 獨 (solitude and single-mindedness) in 燕燕之情以其獨也 speaks of Confucius' unique reading of the poem. In this regard the implication of the impractical nuptial targets is no different to that depicted in "Hanguang".

2.3. The Sensual versed in the Moral

As previously argued Confucius cherishes *qing* in his interpretation of the *Odes* but his endorsement of human emotions should not be taken as a carte blanche for hedonism and indulgency. He considers the emotions and passions reflected in poetry a reality to be grasped in life. Just because he acknowledges the fact that human desires are natural, they need to be contained within the bounds of propriety

in order that they would not become excessive – like water needing a dyke – as it is written in “Fangji” of the 禮記 • 坊記:

子云: “夫禮，坊民所淫，章民之別，使民無嫌，以為民紀者也。”
(Lau 1992a, 139)

The Master said, 'The ceremonial usages serve as dykes to the people against bad excesses (to which they are prone). They display the separation which should be maintained (between the sexes), that there may be no occasion for suspicion, and the relations of the people be well defined. (Legge 1967, 2:284)

In explicating “Guanju” Confucius does not censure sexual desires but commends *li* as a means of regulating the emotions.

關雎以色喻於禮 … 以琴瑟之悅，擬好色之願，以鐘鼓之樂 …
(slips 10, 14)

The sensual feelings in “Guanju” are contained within propriety ... With zithers and lyres sensual appetites are versed in cultural delights. With bells and drums.... (My translation)

For Confucius, the psychotherapeutic effect of music (music being an integral part of *li*) helps to contain sexual appetites, or to transcend the bestial emotions of humans to a higher plane of cultural delight. The moral of “Guanju” is that passions are to be satisfied within the bounds of *li*. The symbolism of musical instrument can be taken further to imply the affirmation of the matrimonial *li* as an institution, providing sexual pleasure and procreation the legitimacy in a cultured and harmonious society. In its prudish tradition the “Little preface” commends “Guanju” as a moral compass for “regulating all under heaven and husbands and wives” (所以風天下，而正夫婦也 – Legge 1994, 4:37]). The paroxysm of concupiscence, so frankly depicted as tossing and turning (寤寐思服…輾轉反側) in “Guanju”, and so unabashedly admitted to be *se* 色 (sexual desire) by Confucius (slip 10), has been twisted by the “Little preface” to mean the queen’s anxiousness in procuring worthy ladies for the king (憂在進賢，不淫其色，哀窈窕，思賢才), as testimony of her virtue of unselfishness as she has no excessive desire to have her lord to herself (Legge 1994, 4:37]). One wonders how the *Maoshi*’s interpretation of the queen’s project of expanding the king’s seraglio can be a model to ordinary husbands and wives. Even allowing for polygamous practices being acceptable in antiquity, she is actually leading the king into temptation and delivering him to evil. Today one might ask: since when has Her Highness stooped so low to become a pimp? In the face of

these prudish interpretations of the Han scholarship, the transcendental effect of *li* (以色喻於禮, slip 10) as explained in “Kongzi shilun” has to be a more acceptable explanation of “Guanju” than the “Little preface”.

Confucius is emphatic on the praxis of *li*. He commends the generosity of the wedding procession displayed by the parties concerned in “Quechao” (slip 11). His commentary on “Daitian”, as discussed in Chapter 3, depicts *zengsun* 曾孫 the aristocrat instructing the common people in action rather than words the proper conduct of *li* through his attendance of the sacrificial ceremony. In the agrarian society of ancient times sacrifices to the deities of nature is an important occasion on which the whole community, including the family of the *zengsun*, participate. The proceedings, conducted according to ritual conventions with prayers said in sincerity, serve to instruct the people in the *li* of maintaining harmony with nature, the supernatural, and between the noble and the plebeian.

As already noted, “Mugua” is rich in sensual symbolism and has been regarded as a wanton poem. However Confucius does not probe this soft spot but looks beyond the materialism of gifts, focusing on the emotional disposition of humans to express goodwill wishes. Confucius invokes the concept of *li* as the procedure to cater for that emotional disposition and cautions that such steps should not be taken lightly. The importance that Confucius assigns to *li* can also be seen in his elation (吾敬之…吾悅之, slip 6) when he recites “Qingmao”, “Wenwang” and “Liewen” which depict the ceremonial scenes of state sacrifices to the sage kings. He finds delight in these poems as it is his emotional response to the sage kings who were the embodiment of virtue and to whom he aspires. The notions of *shi*, *qing* and *li* are concepts around which the discursive of the “Kongzi shilun” coherently evolve, and by which the idea of the sensual is understood to be versed in the moral.

2.4. *Si wu xie* 思無邪 and *Zheng sheng yin* 鄭聲淫

Apart from commenting on individual poems “Kongzi shilun” also explicates the essence of poetry. The aphorism “詩無柰志” (poetry does not manifest unseemly intentions) not only reinforces the concept of 詩言志 (the *Odes* articulate aims or purposes),¹⁸⁰ but also qualifies the very essence of poetic aims or purposes. This can

¹⁸⁰ See earlier discussions in Chapter 2.

be considered in conjunction with Confucius’ overall evaluation of the *Odes* – *si wu xie* (*Analects* 2.2), which literally means ‘think no depravity’.¹⁸¹ Indeed the *Shijing* contains odes that depict themes of love and lust, courtship and coquetry which are considered unwholesome topics that would debase its canonicity. Wen Yiduo asserts that the *feng* poems are rich in erotic diegeses, double *entendres* and *risqué* symbolism (2004, 169-90).¹⁸² To those who are of the moralistic persuasion and believe that 邪 means depravity, the presence of debauched poems in the canon must be perplexing if not embarrassing; Confucius could have expurgated them from the anthology if he had really edited it. Xunzi affirms the place of the *feng* odes in the canon as he considers them “not reckless because they choose to employ [the sagely] Way to moderate themselves” (故風之所以為不逐者，取是以節之也) (Xunzi 8.7; Knoblock 1988, 2:77). The *Maoshi* has come up with its sanctimonious justification for their presence: they were included to extol benevolent rulership and morality or to lampoon the lack of them (Legge 1994, 4:34-5]. Challenging the historical reading of the Mao preface, Zhu Xi identifies some thirty *feng* odes to be *yinshi* (淫詩 wanton poems)¹⁸³ and adds that “though the poets wrote them with depraved thoughts, I read them without a depraved mind.”¹⁸⁴

The problem of interpreting *si wu xie* lies in the polysemic words 思 and 邪; whatever they mean they apply to the entire anthology.¹⁸⁵ If 邪 means depravity, and only some odes of the “Feng” are wanton, why did Confucius tar the rest with the same brush? The staid *ya* and lofty *song* poems certainly do not deserve such a censorship warning. The bone of contention seems to be whether the phrase should be taken at its face value (as rendered above), or should it be interpreted in light of the enterprise of horse training as depicted in the poem “Jiong” 駒 (Ode 297), from which it is quoted. One school of thought proposes that as a function word 思 has no meaning; 邪 means *xu* 徐 (hesitation) and *yi* 斃 (loathing) which describe the whole-hearted attitude of training horses. As depravity has nothing to do with horse training, 無邪 must refer to the undivided attention, dedication and single-mindedness

¹⁸¹ For a detailed explication of the concept of *si wu xie* see Cai Xianjin *et al* 2006, 125-37.

¹⁸² See Wen’s 詩經的性欲觀 (“The Erotica of the *Shijing*”).

¹⁸³ See Zhu Xi’s comments of the poems in *Shijizhuan* 詩集傳.

¹⁸⁴ “彼雖以有邪之思作之，而我以無邪之思讀之” cited by Yu Xing (Yu 2008, 42).

¹⁸⁵ 論語·為政 *Analect* 2.2: “The Odes are three hundred in number; they can be summed up in one phrase, *si wu xie*.”

towards the task at hand (Cheng Shude 1990, 66-7). Not only is 思 a function word that does not mean ‘think’; even if it did Confucius only said “非禮勿視，非禮勿聽，非禮勿言，非禮勿動” (do not look/listen/speak/move unless it is in accordance with the rites) (*Analects* 12.1; Lau 1992b, 108-9, my eclipses) but not 非禮勿思 (do not think unless it is in accordance with the rites). He has never attempted to control human thinking, for it is uncontrollable, particularly when something as natural as passions or sexual desires are concerned.

Unfortunately with the majority of scholars taking a prudish stance it is not surprising to see that *si wu xie* has been loaded with value judgement. The ambiguity of the concept has thus given rise to two contrasting hermeneutic approaches. Over the years scholars have interpreted the odes as a canon for its moral import, rather than reading the poetry (particularly the *feng* poems) for its sensuality as *belles-lettres*.¹⁸⁶ As can be seen from the extant classics, Confucius has never said anything but positive about the *Odes*.¹⁸⁷ As Confucius is meticulous with the rectification of names (正名 *zheng ming* – *Analects* 13.3), he would not have turned a blind eye on the ‘wanton’ poems and pretends that they are anything but salubrious, if indeed he considers them to be salacious. With the aphorism “詩無忤志” from “Kongzi shilun” the meaning of 思無邪 can be clarified. I submit that Confucius has adopted the horse training metaphor and extended it to mean that the *Book of Odes* is cathartic of human emotions most freely, naturally and without reservation or affectation (Cheng Shude 1990, 66-7). The claim that Confucius does not censure human desires and passions can be supported by his comment on the “Feng”:

邦風其納物也博，普觀人俗焉，大斂材焉。其言文，其聲善。
(slip 3)

¹⁸⁶ Kern claims that “Kongzi shilun” rarely discusses the aesthetics of the odes and that some of the comments are unrelated to the poetry. He also points out that it is, among other things, an exposition on self-cultivation (2012, 24-5). Whilst I accept that the manuscript is not a paradigm for critical essays on literature (as pointed out earlier, literature and literary critique have yet to be conceptualized as genres of writing in Confucius’ days), it is my contention that its ahistorical and apolitical critical perspective (focusing on human emotions) lends itself to being considered as a nascent form of literary critique. Self-cultivation has been mentioned in the commentary on “Guanju”, but it is not a dominant theme of the discourse.

¹⁸⁷ The *Shi* teaches gentleness and sincerity of deportment (“Jingjie” of the *Liji*); it may stimulate imagination, endow one with breeding, enable one to live in a community and give expression to grievances (*Analects* 17.9); the study of *Shi* enables proper locution (*Analects* 16.13) etc, which have been discussed earlier.

“Bangfeng” embraces many things: it makes extensive observations of the social mores, manifesting the common people’s mundane bucolic life. Its lyrics are cultured; its tunes are pleasing.

and,

孔子曰，詩其猷乎門，與賤民而豫之，其用心也將何如？曰：邦風是也。(slip 4)

[Confucius] said, “The *Odes* is like an enormous door. It allows the common people [to let themselves out] freely.” How do they put their mind to speaking out [freely]? [I] say, it is all in the ‘Bangfeng’.

Without any preambulatory delimitation, as is the case with his other comments on the *Odes*, Confucius considers the entire collection of the *Odes*, including the poems earmarked wanton by Zhu Xi *et al*, to be cultured and pleasing. Xunzi is even more upfront in admitting that “the *Airs of the States*” are erotic, but “they give satisfaction to the desires men have but not err in their stopping point” (國風之好色也…盈其欲而不愆其止) (Xunzi 27.92; Knoblock 1988, 3:230). For this the logical explanation is that Confucius and Xunzi accept courtship as part of the social life and sexual desires, human nature. Confucius plainly admits that eating, drinking and sexual pleasures are the great desires of mere mortals¹⁸⁸ and does not consider them, or the poems that depict them, to be evil or wanton. “Kongzi shilun” describes the “Feng” as an enormous door, through which human emotions are released. This notion is coherently expressed in the *Analects* 3.1:

子曰：“關雎，樂而不淫，哀而不傷。”

The Master said, “In the *Guanju*, there is joy but not to the extent of wantonness, and sorrow but not to the extent of self-injury.”

(Lau 1992b, 24-5)

Some scholars have argued that the above passage refers to the music but not the poem of “*Guanju*” (Cheng 1990, 1.199).¹⁸⁹ Van Zoeren observes that when an ode is mentioned by title in the *Analects*, it refers to the musical performance or the musical quality rather than the poem (Van Zoeren 1991, 31). Whilst this may be the case, in “Kongzi shilun” Confucius considers the moral upheld in “*Guanju*” excels the *qing* that invokes the poetry (重而皆賢於其初也, slip 10). That Confucius

¹⁸⁸ “禮記·禮運 Liyun” of the *Liji*: “飲食男女，人之大欲存焉。”

¹⁸⁹ See 論語駢枝 *Lunyu Pianzhi* quoted by Cheng Shude in 論語集釋.

commends “Guanju” by bringing the almost taboo subject of sex into the open proves that he does not censure human passions.

Whilst Confucius’ comments on the *Odes* are all positive, his remark *Zheng sheng yin* 鄭聲淫 is more puzzling. He impels the banishment of Zheng tunes (放鄭聲) because they pervert the tradition of *ya* music (惡鄭聲之亂雅樂 – *Analects* 17.18; Lau 1992b, 176-7). The questions are: what does *yin* 淫 mean and whether *Zheng sheng* refers to any of the tunes of the *Odes*. *Yin* can mean ‘obscene’ and ‘excessive’. Some scholars hold that Confucius meant the latter in his remarks about *Zheng sheng* (Cheng 1990, 4.1088).¹⁹⁰ Chen Zhi asserts that the music of Zheng and Wei (鄭衛之音) includes a large collection of tunes and songs which were the legacy of Shang 商. They were of no proper ‘breeding’ like those of the elegant Zhou repertoire but have been drafted into the *Book of Odes*. This happened before Confucius’ time; although Confucius detested such music he was helpless but to accept them as *ya* (雅 elegant) (Chen 2009, 312-5). However, Confucius’ toleration of the depraved Wei and Zheng music cannot be explained in the face of his putting right the *ya* and *song* music;¹⁹¹ he could have equally rearranged the tunes of the Wei and Zheng odes, if they were indeed improper or depraved. On the other hand by *Zheng sheng yin* Confucius might not be referring to the music of the “Airs of Zheng” in the *Odes*. On this issue Zixia’s detailed explanation may be helpful:

鄭音好濫淫志，宋音燕女溺志，衛音趨數煩志，齊音敖辟喬志；此四者皆淫於色而害於德，是以祭祀弗用也。(禮記·樂記) (Lau 1992a, 103)

The music of Zheng is wildly excessive and debauches the mind; the Song music is pruriently seductive and confounds the mind; the Wei music is intensely rapid and irritates the mind; the music of Qi is frivolously vile and makes the mind arrogant. The music of these four states all stimulate sensuality and are harmful to [one’s] virtues; they should therefore not be used at sacrifices.

(“Yueji” of the *Liji*, my translation)

In the received *Shijing* no poems are labelled the Airs of Song 宋. It remains to be investigated whether the state of Song had any odes at all or they had been

¹⁹⁰ See 陳啟源 Chen Qiyuan quoted by Cheng Shude in 論語集釋.

¹⁹¹ 論語·憲問 *Analects* 9.15: “子曰：‘吾自衛反魯，然後樂正，雅頌各得其所。’” (Lau 1992b, 80-1)

included as other *Airs*.¹⁹² In fact it is difficult for a modern person to perceive how music alone could be sexually provocative. Music does affect a listener's mood; a nocturne is calm and soothing to the ear and mind; an elegy is mournful; a minuet graceful, a gigue lively ... but it defies imagination how human feelings can be ‘calibrated’ to perceive the synaesthesia of ‘pruriently seductive’ music. For pure music to be ‘pornographic’ it needs to be more ‘graphic’ than just tonal representations of music scores. It is possible that the word *yin* 音 here refers collectively to a form of entertainment combining songs, music and dance or performances. Despite that, a *prima facie* case may be established: when Zixia critiqued the music of the four states, he was referring to this type of musical entertainment prevalent in those areas rather than those of the “*Airs of Zheng*” in the *Book of Odes*. This interpretation can be supported by Confucius’ assertion that music does not express indelicate emotions (樂無紊情, slip 1); the linguistic context suggests that Confucius is referring to the musical quality of the *Odes*, not music in general and certainly not the popular music of Zheng and Song. But Zixia is right; in the Western context *Così fan tutte* cannot be sung in church as a substitute for *Gloria in excelsis Deo*!

3. Summary

“Kongzi shilun” stands in clear contrast to the *shi* commentarial tradition, particularly the Han scholarship which reads the *Odes* from moral-political perspectives. In “Kongzi shilun” the author examines the thematic elements of *qing* as can be read from the majority of the odes. *Qing* assumes various meanings ranging from ‘facts’ or ‘genuineness’, to sensuality embracing ‘emotions’, ‘passions’, and different feelings and moods. The claim that in pre-Han literature *qing* only meant ‘facts’ or ‘genuineness’ but never ‘passions’ has been shown to be unsubstantiated. Evidence found in excavated texts of the Warring States testifies that ‘facts’ and ‘passions’ are intertwined concepts which conflate into *qing*. The manuscript author’s reading of the *Odes* reveals that a range of rich human emotions and feelings can be read from the poems. This thesis does not seek to subvert the concept

¹⁹² Song was a state of the remnants of Shang. According to Fang Yurun it was situated roughly among the states of Wei, Cho, Chen and Zheng (Fang 1986, 10). The classification of *Airs* by state is a complicated issue and is outside the scope of this project.

of *li* in the hermeneutics of the *Shijing*, nor deny the moral efficacy of the *Book of Odes*, but to claim that the author of “Kongzi shilun” does not present Confucius’ *shi* didactics as one that censures *qing* or the poems that celebrate it. However, Confucius has proposed to hedge against the excesses of human emotions and passions through *li* as a means of transcending human desires and regulating social and spiritual relations.

“Kongzi shilun” has provided fresh textual evidence to clarify that some Confucian scholars during the Warring States period did not consider any of the *Odes* or their music to be wanton. For them, *qing* has found its natural place in humanity and in poetry. From “Kongzi shilun” it could be inferred that no reading of the *Odes* is more appropriate than reading its sensuality which, not even prudishness could choose to eschew, except to masquerade it as moralistic sententia. Confucius interpretation of the odes celebrates *qing* to be ‘actual’ as much as they are natural, as he regards poetry as a means of emotional catharsis, expressing human passions and feelings most freely, without hesitation and affectation.

Part D CONCLUSION

Chapter 6 “Kongzi shilun” and The *Shijing*

子絕四：毋意，毋必，毋固，毋我。

— 論語·子罕

There were four things from which
the Master was entirely free.
He had no foregone conclusions,
no arbitrary predeterminations,
no obstinacy, and no egoism.

—*Analects* 4.4

(Translated by James Legge)

The ‘sensual’ and the ‘moral’ are two different interpretive strategies for reading the *Book of Odes*, exemplified on the one hand by “Kongzi shilun” adopting the ‘sensual’ and on the other, the Han commentarial tradition engaging in the ‘moral’. In this thesis the ‘sensual’ is defined as the notion of *qing* 情 (human emotions, passions, feelings) that can be read from the poems; the ‘moral’ is meant to be the paradigmatic interpretation of poetry through *li* 禮 (rules of propriety) as a pedagogic tool used by the sage kings to instruct the people.

The objective of this project is to inquire into how “Kongzi shilun” works as a key to poetic meaning. To this end a textual study and critical review of the manuscript have been undertaken. The textual study aims at interpreting the archaic language of the manuscript and translating it into English. Based on the findings of

the textual study and through exploring poetic meaning, the critical review attempts to identify the *shi* didactics as expounded in the manuscript and to compare it with the pre-Qin and Han commentarial tradition. This thesis claims that the notion of *qing* is the dominant critical perspective of the manuscript, which is a stark contrast to the Han scholarship of situating poetic meaning within morality, history and politics. Incidental to delineating the meaning of *qing*, arguments have been advanced to contend the view held by some contemporary scholars that the word never means ‘passions’ in pre-Han literature. With the meaning of *qing* clarified the critical review then inquires into the ‘sensual’ and the ‘moral’ interpretations of the *Odes*. Finally, fresh textual evidence is adduced from the manuscript to clarify the concepts of *si wu xue* 思無邪 and *Zheng sheng yin* 鄭聲淫, which are Confucius’ comments on the odes and music, the interpretation of which has caused much controversy over the years.

This study has briefly reviewed both Chinese and Western hermeneutic theories in the search for a suitable framework for interpreting and translating “Kongzi shilun”. Whilst Chinese hermeneutics has barely developed its own theories of interpretation, in many aspects it shares the concerns that have been contemplated by Western thinkers. Although the Chinese mode of thinking does not embrace ontological issues of knowledge or ‘being’, it is existential in nature as it emphasizes the role of human experience in perception and understanding no less seriously than its Western counterparts.

Chinese hermeneutics features two basic concepts as advocated by Mencius: tracing authorial intent and seeking to know the authors and the times they lived in. However, opinions on authorial intent are as divided as it is in the West as some scholars espouse the theory that readers are the creators of meaning. Western critical theorists hold that the discernment of authorial intent through extrinsic research may be irrelevant as meaning does not reside outside the text in biographies and history. Furthermore, because of the subjectivity of the reader, authorial intent cannot be substantively proven. In a sense, Mencius’ principle of knowing the authors and their times shares similar theoretical grounds with Western hermeneutics: interpretation must be made within a horizon of “already granted meanings and intentions” which meets the horizon of the text. In fact, getting to know the (ancient) authors and the age in which they lived can only be possible through language or text. Thus apprehension of meaning is possible when the linguistic contexts of the interpreter

and the interpreted align. This theory of contextual congruity firmly anchors the Chinese hermeneutical process on textual or linguistic grounds. The methodology thus adopted for interpreting “Kongzi shilun” is to allow the texts of the manuscript and the poems to speak, and to discern from the congruity of their linguistic contexts the hidden meaning which the authors did not and could not say, yet which in the text comes to light as its innermost dynamic. For translation, it has been argued that it defies theorization and that only solutions and standards are applicable. To this end the translation of the manuscript into English has negotiated adherence to the source language and correspondence to the target language, striving to maintain a balance between the preservation of literary fidelity to the Chinese and the avoidance of linguistic violence to the English.

The primary texts used in this research are taken from the Shanghai Museum’s publication entitled *The Shanghai Bowuguan cang Zhanguo Chu zhushu* (1) 上海博物館藏戰國楚竹書(一) (The Shanghai Museum collection of Chu bamboo corpus of the Warring States Period – I). This edition provides clear photographs of the bamboo slips and the transcripts of the ancient text in modern Chinese with editorial comments. For the texts of the *Odes* there is no alternative but to rely on the received *Maoshi* as it is the only extant version of the *Odes*. I have argued on the strength of available evidence that despite the *Maoshi* text being at variance with fragmentary citations surviving in other sources the impact on meaning is insignificant. I have also contested Martin Kern’s claim which regards the *Maoshi* texts as tendentious word choices reflecting the Mao-Zheng glosses and commentaries. Thus the *Maoshi* as received is considered as a reliable source text for the study of “Kongzi shilun”. To this end reference is made to James Legge’s work, *The Chinese Classics*, which provides the Chinese text and English translations of the poems. Secondary sources include the mass of philological and many other topical studies of the manuscript and the *Odes* by Chinese and Western scholars.

The textual study of “Kongzi shilun” has considered the physical and structural forms of the bamboo slips, inquiring into the codicological issues of authorship, date of inditement, denomination and scholarship lineage. Although the bamboo corpus was an acquisition on the commercial market rather than a recovery from an archaeological site, doubts on its provenance have been largely dispelled as it has been authenticated by empirical and scientific analyses to be a Warring States

(fourth to third centuries BCE) artefact, as such it predates all extant exegetical works on the *Shijing*.

Written on bamboo slips which measure about 55 cm long and 6 mm wide, “Kongzi shilun” comprises 29 slips of which only one is intact, the others all suffer from varying degree of damage. When fully inscribed, a slip contains 55 to 56 graphs but six slips have had their upper and lower sections left blank. The text as a whole is unstable, as its contents depend on the arrangement of the bamboo slips. Opinions on their possible arrangements vary but generally, it can be organized into discussions of the *Odes* and its different divisions in general, and commentaries on about 60 poems in particular. “Kongzi shilun” is designated as such because it is found to have recorded Confucius’ commentary on selected poems in the *Shijing*, though his authorship of the manuscript has been ruled out. The author is believed to be a third or even fourth generation Confucian follower or followers whose explication of the poems had incorporated quotations ascribed to Confucius. However, within the text Confucius’ narrative voice cannot be clearly distinguished from that of the author and throughout this thesis, reference made to Confucius as the narrator in “Kongzi shilun” is a matter of attribution and is intended to mean and include the implied author. The reconstructed text presented in this thesis, upon which the English translation is based, is the result of consulting the various options of slip arrangements proposed by the leading researchers in this field.

This research is subject to four basic assumptions. Firstly, the bamboo manuscript is assumed to be of the vintage and authenticity as claimed, although there is no reason to suspect that it is not. Secondly the commentaries and words attributed to Confucius as they appear in “Kongzi shilun” are understood to be the perception and representation of the manuscript author; as such they may or may not be those of the historical Confucius. Thirdly, it is assumed that textual variances between the *Odes* as read by the manuscript author and the *Shijing* as received today are insubstantial. Lastly, because of the unstable text caused by the uncertain foliation of the bamboo slips, missing words and broken or missing slips, no claim for authority and accuracy can be made on the interpretation of the manuscript, but it does represent carefully considered opinions and reasoned arguments.

In transcribing and interpreting the archaic text of “Kongzi shilun”, copious exegetical opinions have been assessed with a view to critiquing, and if appropriate, adopting, the interpretations propounded by various commentators, or in case of

dissension, proposing my own reading. As a result of the textual study the manuscript has been reconstructed in contemporary Chinese and translated into English, which are presented in Chapter 3 and Appendix A.

As part of the critical review five poems which are considered to be more complex in form and content than the others – “Yanyan” 燕燕 (Ode 28), “Getan” 葛覃 (Ode 2), “Gantang” 甘棠 (Ode 16), “Datian” 大田 (Ode 212) and “Muguo” 木瓜 (Ode 64) – have been chosen for further study; their implicit meanings have been explored as prompted by the commentaries of “Kongzi shilun”. These poems are found to have either embraced deep human emotions or elucidated the praxis of *li*. This exercise illustrates how “Kongzi shilun” has enhanced current understanding of the odes.

More importantly the critical review of “Kongzi shilun” entails a brief survey of the pre-Qin 先秦 and Han 漢 commentarial landscape, with special attention to the Han scholarship. The survey reveals that during pre-Qin times poetic lines have been quoted to adumbrate personal wishes and opinions or reinforce normative arguments. The review further focuses on the Han commentarial traditions of the Mao 毛, Han 韓, Lu 魯 and Qi 齊 schools; their moral readings of the odes serve as the backdrop for comparison with the sensual reading of “Kongzi shilun”. The Han scholars have appropriated the odes to promote their didactic and political agenda by reading the poems, the “Airs of the States” in particular, either as panegyrics (*mei* 美) on the virtues, or satires (*ci* 刺) on the depravity of the sovereigns and their ladies. As the Mao tradition has affirmed, these moral readings function to instruct and transform the people, or in some cases, the satires serve to admonish those in power. However, by way of critical comment this study has interrogated the efficacy of moral reading as advocated by the Han scholars.

In comparing the sensual reading of “Kongzi shilun” with the moral reading of the four schools, it is found that although “Kongzi shilun” provides no explicit comments on the *song* and *daya* poems, which have been interpreted by the four schools as ceremonial paeans exalting the deified sage kings, Confucius’ delight of reading them as depicted in the manuscript would mean that these poems would not have been interpreted too differently. On the other hand most of the moral interpretations of the Han scholars are found to be strained especially those panegyrics and satires on the virtues and depravity of the ruling class. Such readings

are considered to be irreconcilable with the ahistorical and apolitical reading of “Kongzi shilun”, which is found to have focused on the sensuality of the poems.

In addressing the notion of *qing* it is necessary to define the term and to contend the generalization propounded by some scholars that it means only ‘the facts’, ‘genuine’ or ‘genuinely’ but never ‘passions’ in pre-Han literature. Texts from the *Xunzi* 荀子 and the *Liji* 禮記 have been adduced to refute this claim. Support has also been drawn from the excavated manuscript “Xing zi ming chu” 性自命出 and related commentaries that *qing* conflates meanings of ‘the facts’ on one hand and ‘emotions’ on the other, including their denotations and inflections. The binome *minxing* (民性), which appears three times in “Kongzi shilun”, has been glossed by most commentators loosely as human nature. By applying Western philosophical analysis which defines *qing* as having cognitive contents, intentionality and direction, I conclude that *minxing* falls within the definition of *qing*, which has been translated as ‘emotional disposition’. Rendering the meaning of *minxing* as such results in a more coherent reading of the commentaries on the poems concerned.

This thesis argues that the manuscript author has taken a sensual reading of the *Odes*. Although the *Maoshi* identifies *qing* as the motivation behind poetic creativity, it only mentions the concept briefly and then shifts to the tautology of moralistic interpretation. By reading the poems as panegyrics or satires charged with moral considerations, poetry has become the moral compass of the sage kings for transforming and instructing the people. On the contrary “Kongzi shilun” is discriminately ahistorical and apolitical in its reading of the *Odes*, rarely referring to any historical personae or events unless they are explicitly identified in the poems. The word *qing* only appears four times in the manuscript but the author’s comments have invoked many facets of emotions, passions and feelings. Notions of kinship love, emotions of ancestral veneration, respect for authority, feelings of scepticism, animosity and helplessness, complaints of hardship and so on, can be read from the poems. Other than these, the critique of the poems in terms of conjugal love and unabashedly as sexual passions is unique. This findings lead to the conclusion that the author regards *qing* as a reality to be grasped, not thorns in the flesh to be plucked. However, the use of *li* – the rules of propriety – is advocated to curb excesses of *qing*, as a means to regulate a harmonious society, and for *qing* to find proper expression.

The interpretation of Confucius’ comments in relation to the *Odes* – *si wu xue* 思無邪 and *Zheng sheng yin* 鄭聲淫 – has divided exegetes for many centuries. Some scholars hold that *si wu xue* literally meant ‘think no depraved thoughts’. Others contend that it should be read within the context of its origin, the poem “Jiong” 駒 (Ode 297) which describes the total devotion to training horses. It has been argued that as there are only a handful of *feng* poems that have been considered wanton, there is no need for Confucius to raise the alarm (think no depraved thoughts) for the entire anthology. Thus it is reasonable to adopt the horse training interpretation and extend it to mean that the *Book of Odes* is a catharsis of human emotions which are released most freely, naturally and without reservation or affectation. This interpretation is supported by the comments in “Kongzi shilun” on the “Bangfeng” 邦風 and on the seemliness of the *Odes* as a whole. Likewise the comment that music does not express indelicate emotions supports the argument that the tunes of “Zhengfeng” are not what *Zheng sheng yin* is referring to. The excessive music was most probably those prevalent then in the state of Zheng.

This thesis has explored the implicit meanings of the more complex poems leading to improvements on Legge’s translation of them but a great number of others have not been covered. Some of the graphs and expressions in the manuscript that have not been satisfactorily glossed may be relevant topics for future research. This thesis has not inquired into the question of the arrangement of the “Feng”, “Ya” and “Song” divisions of the received text, as other scholars have done, in relation to the author’s order of review in the manuscript. It is felt that at this stage such a question may not be too meaningful as the answers depend on the bamboo slip arrangement, for which many different permutations are possible. On the other hand, there does not seem to be any need for a discourse of this nature to follow any set order of the primary texts it critiques.

To some inquisitive mind the manuscript may be disappointing in that Confucius’ comments have not directly addressed (confirmed or refuted) the controversial issues about the political events and historical figures as the Mao tradition has propounded. However, this is the wrong question to ask of “Kongzi shilun” as it is for all intents and purposes a literary commentary, not a historical or philosophical essay. Many scholars have chosen to exploit the historical and metaphysical import of the manuscript in conjunction with exophoric references from extant classical and excavated texts by focusing on a key word or two in the

manuscript. The subject study is focused on poetic meaning as the response to the authorial intent of “Kongzi shilun”.

Although arguments have been presented to critique the moral reading of the Han scholarship, this thesis does not seek to subvert the normative effect of the poems, nor their historical interpretation in its entirety, but to claim that the *Odes* should be primarily understood and appreciated through the notion of *qing*, from which poetry is germinated.

In conclusion, “Kongzi shilun” as the oldest monographic discourse on Chinese poetics is also the most comprehensive commentary on the *Odes* among the extant pre-Qin literature. As an exegesis of the *Shijing* it has mainly taken a sensual but textually based reading of the poems, explicating their themes of *qing* and *li*, some with detailed comments and others in the form of brief notes. The author reads from the poems a rich palette of human emotions and feelings of love and hatred, spite and respect, joy and sorrow across the ambit of human relations and life situations. Confucius is not presented in “Kongzi shilun” as promoting censorship on human passions, not even on sexual desires, but cautioning the indulgence of excesses and using *li* as a means to regulate life in society and to deal with excesses of *qing*. The Mao preface, as previously noted, asserts that poetry evolves from *qing* and stops at *li*. Between the poesis of emotions and the bounds of propriety the Mao tradition has left a vacuum, which the manuscript has now filled. “Kongzi shilun” has provided fresh textual evidence of the Confucius’ *shi* didactics as presented by the manuscript author and has enhanced current understanding of the *Odes* embracing the sensual and moral aspects of poetry.

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