# XUNZI

BERSERKER

BOOKS

# BOOKS 1–6

# BOOK I

## *An Exhortation to Learning*

### INTRODUCTION

A love of learning characterized most Ru thinkers, but for Xunzi learning was a matter of crucial importance; only through learning, involving conscious effort, could the original nature of man be overcome. Learning does not ornament or refine a basically good nature, or direct a neutral nature toward social good; rather, it conquers evil tendencies inherent in man through the conscious exertion entailed in all learning. The "Exhortation to Learning" stresses that learning continues so long as one lives and that the gentleman must accordingly examine himself each day to make sure that he applies his learning to his conduct. Learning improves our original nature and transcends it, just as ice, though made from water, is colder than water. Learning is a tincture that permanently alters us, like dye. Once we have been shaped by education, we will never revert to our original "evil" nature, just as a straight board steamed into the shape of a wheel will not revert to its original shape. Learning is the standard, the plumbline that straightens out our irregularities, and the technique, the whetstone, that sharpens our natural abilities.

Learning transforms our horizons and sense of perspective. The process of education effects changes in us so that though as children we are born much the same, we grow up to be very different people. The gentleman is distinguished from ordinary men by his willingness to "borrow" the useful and good qualities of other things and other people. Since we are affected by our environment, the gentleman takes great care to see that his surroundings are proper. Beginnings are important. Thus, the gentleman is cautious about his inner power and watches his speech.

One of Xunzi's most important doctrines is that of *ji* 積 "accumulation." Differences in accomplishment are the result not of differences in inborn talent but of steadfastness and constancy of purpose and the accumulation resulting from continuous effort. Though the earthworm lacks the advantages of the crab's legs and claws, by its persistence it can accomplish its ends, whereas the crab, which moves in every direction at

once, accomplishes nothing. Good deeds accumulate, and achievements that may have been undertaken in obscurity are certain to be noticed.

Philosophers often cited well-known paragons to illustrate the effect of following a philosophical principle or to show that even with lesser abilities one could accomplish as much, if one mastered his philosophy. Xunzi contrasts a worn-out old nag with the fabulous Qiji 騏驥, famed as one of the remarkable horses belonging to King Mu of the Zhou dynasty, which, when driven by the great charioteer Zaofu 造父 on the western journey of the king, were able to cover 1,000 *li* in a single day.[1]

*Hu Ba and Bo Ya.* Hu Ba was an ancient expert at playing the zither, though it was not known when he lived. The *Liezi* (*jishi*, 5.109) records that "when Hu Ba played the lute, birds would dance and fishes leap."[2]

Bo Ya was an ancient who became accomplished at playing the lute, but no one knew when he lived.[3] When he played his lute, the six horses would raise their heads from their feeding sacks to listen. Bo Ya studied the lute under Cheng Lian 成連, who carried him to the fabulous Isles of the Blest, where his musical talent was developed. Later he became friends with a woodcutter named Zhong Ziqi 鍾子期, who fully grasped the beauty of his playing. Tradition records that once when Bo Ya was strumming his lute while Zhong Ziqi was listening, his thoughts turned to a high mountain. Ziqi remarked: "How excellent indeed! Lofty and majestic like Mount Tai." A short time later, when his thoughts turned to rippling waters, Ziqi said: "How beautifully done! Rolling and swelling like the Yangtze." Another time when he was caught in a sudden downpour, Bo Ya improvised an air about the constant drizzle, and then he composed a variation on the sound of crashing mountains. Whatever he played, Ziqi grasped the drift of his thinking. "How well you listen! Wherever my thoughts wander, you imagine just what is on my mind!" When Ziqi died, Bo Ya was disconsolate, tore the strings off his lute, and smashed it because he felt that there was no one in the world worth playing for. To the end of his life he never played again.[4]

It was a general Chinese belief that all nature reverberates in sympathetic harmony with the accomplishments and moral self-cultivation of the gentleman, just as of old fishes and horses had responded to Hu Ba and Bo Ya. In mentioning these men, Xunzi makes use of an important theory derived from magnetic and acoustical phenomena. The ancient belief, as we have seen, was that a continuum linked even things separated by space, as when the lodestone draws iron particles to itself or when a note played on one instrument causes another to vibrate. So, too, there were invisible links between men and through music between men and animals. The effect of music on animals was akin to that of the moon on sea creatures. When the theories of philosophers like Zou Yan were

combined with the general conviction that music was of cosmic importance, even extraordinary things seemed possible.

*The Process of Learning.* Though Xunzi held that the process of learning should never cease, he realized that the program of learning must have a beginning and an end. Its immediate end is to create a scholar, its final end is to produce a sage. In this book, Xunzi distinguishes three levels of accomplishment: the scholar, the gentleman, and the sage. The scholar puts into practice his learning, he admires the model transmitted by tradition, and he seeks to emulate the example of the past. The gentleman exerts himself out of his love of learning, he embodies a firm sense of purpose, and he realizes the meaning of his learning in his conduct. The sage fully comprehends the meaning of things and possesses an inexhaustible and incisive intelligence that illuminates everything with its brilliance. For Xunzi, learning begins with the traditional materials learned through recitation, proceeds through the *Documents*, the *Odes*, the *Music*, and the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, until it reaches its conclusion with the *Rituals*. The supreme importance that Xunzi placed on ritual matters distinguishes his philosophy. To Xunzi, "ritual" meant less the details of ceremonial behavior that had seemed important to such earlier Ru as Ziyou, Zizhang, and Zixia and more the fundamental principles underlying all human behavior.

The works he mentions had become, as we have seen, canonical in Xunzi's time. Xunzi adapted this common heritage as the core of his program of education. These works, to be recited until memorized along with the teacher's explication of difficult points, were the foundation of thinking. They supplied an indispensable wealth of human experience and wisdom that enlarged one's own views and cautioned against overemphasis on the merely ephemeral. They held before one the splendid example of antiquity wherein all great ideas had once been exemplified in individuals and in society. An orator and a thinker would always preface his argument with "I have heard," so that he might repeat what he had learned from his own master. The learning of the gentleman was characterized by reflection, and it influenced his every thought and action. Not an ornament worn for the sake of others, it refined his character and molded his actions. The gentleman thus responded with perfect congruity to the requirements of his surroundings, like an echo.

With this view of learning, Xunzi naturally held that one cannot learn on one's own. The *Rituals* and *Music* have no explanations, the relevance of the *Odes* and *Documents* is not obvious, and the import of the *Annals* is not easily grasped. Thus, a teacher is necessary, both to provide explanations and to act as a model. Devotion to a teacher and learning to repeat his explanations are the best way of becoming a gentleman. The second

best is exaltation of ritual principles, which will provide a guide to correct behavior. But if a man neither had a teacher nor exalted ritual principles, Xunzi believed that all such a person could expect to do is master unrelated facts or mechanically repeat the *Odes* and *Documents* without understanding their import. Such a person will be but a shallow and vain Ru, however skilled he might become in disputation.

Xunzi's gentleman is to be guided by ritual in all things. He does not engage in conversation and debate with those who are uncouth. He is careful to keep his speech appropriate to the occasion, speaking only where it is proper, saying only what is required by the situation, carefully observing the demeanor and mood of those with whom he talks. The gentleman, being catholic and universal, unifies all things with his learning and makes them secure, so that he does not leave with one principle and return with another. He fully comprehends the requirements of his various social roles—subject, son, father, husband, friend—and is at home with the requirements of a sense of humanity and moral duty. He is so expert that his responses perfectly suit the circumstances because his learning is entire and not of a piece.

*Villains.* Xunzi stressed that becoming expert only in a few things and neglecting a broad base of learning has unfortunate consequences for the individual. But, for Xunzi, such narrowness can have disastrous consequences for society as well. When such people occupy high positions and when there is no one of moral worth and true education to oppose them, they plunder and despoil the people and undermine the foundations of government. Xunzi recalls the three great villains of Chinese history: Jie, Zhou Xin, and Robber Zhi 盜跖. Notorious for their utterly irredeemable depravity and wickedness, each was a contemporary of one of the great heroes and paragons of Chinese society. Jie destroyed the Xia dynasty and Zhou Xin ruined the Shang, to be succeeded, respectively, by the sage kings Tang and Wen.

Robber Zhi does not fit into any scheme of political history. Rather, he is the hero of a dissident school that called into question the legitimacy of all Ru and Mohist notions of government. He was famous for intimidating Confucius and besting him in argument, the "record" of which is now contained in the *Zhuangzi* (29 "Dao Zhi" 盜跖, 9.17b–21b). To the Ru, he was a clever and dangerous brigand and nothing more. He was said to have been the younger brother of Liuxia Hui 柳下惠, a minister of Lu admired by Confucius. Zhi organized a band of 9,000 brigands and rampaged through the empire, stealing, looting, terrorizing the population, and carrying off wives and daughers. He ignored every custom and law, even to neglecting his family and offering no sacrifices to his ancestors. Confucius suggested that Liuxia Hui should

do something about his brother, but Hui replied that Zhi was hopeless. So Confucius with two of his disciples went to reform him despite Hui's warnings. Confucius attempted to persuade him to follow the Way, but Zhi contemptuously dismissed all that Confucius had said as "inane, inadequate, fraudulent, sinister, vain, and hypocritical," in short, "not worth discussing." Confucius was utterly astonished and fled, fumbling three times when he tried to grasp the chariot reins, his expression blank and his face ashen. On his return, Confucius described the visit as like "patting a tiger's head and plaiting its whiskers."

Because Xunzi's gentleman understands the need for completeness, he recites and enumerates his studies so that no point escapes his notice, he ponders the overall meaning and significance. He translates his learning into action so that his conduct embodies the traditions of the ancients, and he carefully and attentively eliminates what is harmful and nurtures what is good. Even his senses are transformed, so that the world he experiences is quite different from that of the petty man. Thus, he is not swayed by temporal matters, and he cannot be deterred from doing what is right. "He was born to follow it, and he will die following it."

## TEXT

### *1.1*

The gentleman says: "Learning must never be concluded."

Though blue dye comes from the indigo plant, it is bluer than indigo. Ice is made from water, but it is colder than water.

A piece of wood straight as a plumbline can, by steaming, be made pliable enough to bend into the shape of a wheel rim, so its curvature will conform to the compass. Yet, even though it is then allowed to dry out completely in the sun, it will not return to its former straightness because the process of steaming has effected this change in it.

So, too, wood that has been marked with the plumbline will be straight and metal that has been put to the whetstone will be sharp.

In broadening his learning, the gentleman each day examines himself so that his awareness will be discerning and his actions without excess.

*1.2*

> Truly if you do not climb a high mountain, you will be unaware of the height of the sky. If you do not look down into a deep gorge, you will be unaware of the thickness of the earth.

If you have not heard the words inherited from the Ancient Kings,[5] you will be unaware of the greatness of learning and inquiry. The children of Hann 干[6] and Yue 越 and of the tribes of Yi 夷 and Mo 貊[7] are all born making the same sounds, but they grow up having different customs because the process of education has effected such changes in them. An Ode says:[8]

> O you gentlemen,
> Be not constantly at ease and at rest.
> Be thoughtful and respectful in your official position.
> Love those who are upright and correct.
> And the spirits will heed you,
> And will increase your bright blessings.[9]

There is no spirit so great as the transformation of the self with the Way, and there is no blessing so long lasting as being without misfortune.[10]

*1.3*

> I once spent a whole day in thought, but it was not so valuable as a moment in study.[11] I once stood on my tiptoes to look out into the distance, but it was not so effective as climbing up to a high place for a broader vista.
>
> Climbing to a height and waving your arm does not cause the arm's length to increase, but your wave can be seen farther away.
>
> Shouting downwind does not increase the tenseness of the sound, but it is heard more distinctly.[12]
>
> A man who borrows a horse and carriage does not improve his feet, but he can extend his travels 1,000 *li*.[13] A man who borrows a boat and paddles does not gain any new ability in water, but he can cut across rivers and seas.[14]

The gentleman by birth is not different from other men;[15] he is just good at "borrowing" the use of external things.[16]

*1.4*

> In the southern regions, there is a bird called the "dunce dove" that builds its nest out of feathers woven together with hair and

attaches the nest to the flowering tassels of reeds. The winds come, the tassels snap off, the eggs break, and the baby birds are killed.[17]

It is not that the nest was not well made; rather, it resulted from what it was attached to.

In the western regions, there is a tree called the "servant's cane" that has a trunk only four inches long and grows on the top of high mountains, yet it looks down into chasms a hundred fathoms deep.[18]

It is not that this tree's trunk is able to grow to such length; rather, it is the result of its situation.

Raspberry vines growing among hemp plants are not staked, yet they grow up straight. [White sand put into a black slime will mix with it and become entirely black.][19]

If the root of the orchid and the rhizome of the valerian[20] are soaked in the water used to wash rice,[21] the gentleman will not go near them, and the petty man will not wear them.

It is not that their substance is unpleasing; it is the result of what they were soaked in. Accordingly,

where the gentleman resides is sure to be a carefully chosen neighborhood,[22] and when he travels, it is certain to be in the company of scholars,

so that he can keep away from what is untoward and low and draw near what is fair and upright.

*1.5*

There must be some beginning for every type of phenomenon that occurs. The coming of honor or disgrace must be a reflection of one's inner power.

From rotting meat come maggots; decaying wood produces woodworms.[23]

An insolent disregard for one's own person creates therewith calamity and misfortune.[24]

The rigid cause themselves to be broken; the pliable cause themselves to be bound.[25]

Those whose character is mean and vicious will rouse others to animosity against them.

When firewood is spread out evenly, fire will seek out the driest sticks. When the ground has been leveled out evenly, water will seek the dampest places.

> Grasses and trees grow together with their own type; birds and beasts live together in their own groups; each thing follows after its own kind.[26]

Accordingly,

> when the target is set out on the archery range, bows and arrows will arrive. Where the trees in the forest flourish, axes and halberds will come. Where things have turned sour, gnats will collect.

Truly, words have the potential to summon disaster, and actions the potential to invite disgrace, so the gentleman is cautious about where he takes his position.[27]

*1.6*

If you accumulate enough earth to build up a high hill, rain and wind will flourish because of it. If you accumulate enough water to fill a chasm, dragons and scaly dragons will be born within it. If you accumulate enough good to make whole your inner power, a divine clarity of intelligence will be naturally acquired and a sagelike mind will be fully realized.[28] Accordingly,

> if you do not accumulate paces and double paces, you will lack the means to reach 1,000 *li*, and if you do not accumulate small streams, you will have no way to fill a river or sea.
>
> Even a famous thoroughbred like Qiji cannot cover ten paces in a single stride. But in ten yokings even a worn-out nag can. Its achievement consists in its not giving up.[29]
>
> If you start carving but give up, you cannot cut even a rotting piece of wood in two. Yet if you carve away and never give up, even metal and stone can be engraved.
>
> Though the earthworm has neither the advantage of claws and teeth nor the strength of muscles and bones, it can eat dust and dirt above ground and drink from the waters of the Yellow Springs below,[30]

because its mind is fixed on a constant end.[31]

> The crab has eight legs and two claws; still if there is no hole made by an eel or snake, it will have no safe place to live,

because its mind moves in every direction at once.

For these reasons, if there is no dark obscurity in purpose,[32] there will be no reputation for brilliance; if there is no hidden secretiveness in the performance of duties, there will be no awe-inspiring majesty in achievements. If you attempt to travel both forks of a road, you will arrive nowhere, and if you attempt to serve two masters, you will please neither.

The eye cannot look at two objects and see either clearly; the ear cannot listen to two things and hear either distinctly.

The wingless dragon has no limbs, but it can fly; the flying squirrel has five talents, but it is reduced to extremity.[33]

An Ode says:[34]

> The ring dove is in the mulberry tree,
> Its young ones are seven.
> The good man, my lord,
> His bearing is constant,
> His bearing is constant,
> As though his mind were tied.

Thus, the gentleman is tied to constancy.[35]

*1.7*

In antiquity, when Hu Ba played the zither, deep-water sturgeons came up to listen, and when Bo Ya played the lute, the six horses looked up from their feed bags.[36]

Truly there is no sound so faint that it is not to be heard, and no action so concealed that it is not visible.

Where jade is buried in the hills, the plants have a special sheen, and where pearls grow in the deeps, the banks do not parch.[37]

Good deeds—do they not accumulate! Surely it is not true that no one will ever hear of them![38]

*1.8*

Learning—where should it begin and where should it end! I say: Its proper method is to start with the recitation of the Classics and conclude with the reading of the *Rituals*.[39] Its real purpose is first to create a scholar and in the end to create a sage.[40] If you genuinely accumulate and earnestly practice for a long time, then you will become an initiate.[41] Learning continues until death and only then does it stop.[42] Thus, though the methods employed to learn come to a conclusion, the purpose of learning must never, even for an instant, be put aside. Those who undertake learning become men; those who neglect it become as wild beasts. Truly the *Documents* contain the record of governmental affairs. The *Odes* set the correct standards to which pronunciations should adhere.[43] The *Rituals* contain the model for the primary social distinctions and the categories used by analogical extension for the guiding rules and ordering norms of behavior. Accordingly, when learning has been perfected in the rituals, it has come to its terminus. Surely this may be called the culmination of the Way and its Power! The reverence and refinement

of the *Rituals*, the concord and harmony of the *Music*, the breadth of the *Odes* and *Documents*, the subtlety of the *Annals*—all the creations of Heaven and Earth are completed in them.

*1.9*

> The learning of the gentleman enters through the ear, is stored in the mind,[44] spreads through the four limbs, and is visible in his activity and repose.[45]
>
> In his softest word and slightest movement,[46] in one and all,[47] the gentleman can be taken as a model and pattern.[48]

The learning of the petty man enters the ear and comes out the mouth. Since the distance between the mouth and ear is no more than four inches,[49] how could it be sufficient to refine the seven-foot body of a man![50]

> In antiquity men undertook learning for the sake of self-improvement; today people undertake learning for the sake of others.[51]

The learning of the gentleman is used to refine his character. The learning of the petty man is used like ceremonial offerings of birds and calves.[52] Accordingly, informing where no question has been posed is called "forwardness,"[53] and offering information on two points when only one has been raised is called "garrulity."[54] Both forwardness and garrulity are to be condemned! The gentleman is responsive like an echo.[55]

*1.10*

> In learning, no method is of more advantage than to be near a man of learning.

The *Rituals* and *Music* present models but do not offer explanation;[56] the *Odes* and *Documents* present matters of antiquity but are not always apposite; the *Annals* are laconic, and their import is not quickly grasped.[57] It is just on these occasions that the man of learning repeats the explanations of the gentleman. Thus, he is honored for his comprehensive and catholic acquaintance with the affairs of the world.[58] Therefore it is said: "In learning, no method is of more advantage than to be near a man of learning."

*1.11*

Of the direct routes to learning, none is quicker than devotion to a man of learning. The next best route is exaltation of ritual principles.[59] If

you can neither be devoted to a man of learning nor exalt ritual principles, how will you do more than learn unordered facts or merely mechanically follow the *Odes* and *Documents*? In this case you will never, even to the end of your days, escape being nothing more than an untutored Ru. If you would take the Ancient Kings as your source and the principle of humanity and justice as your foundation, then ritual principles will rectify the warp and woof, the straightaways and byways of your life. It is like lifting a fur collar by turning under your fingers to grasp it to raise it up. Those that fall into their proper place are too many to be counted.[60] Not being led by the examples of ritual principles while using the *Odes* and *Documents* as the basis of action is like "using a finger to plumb the depth of the Yellow River," or "a lance to pound the husks off millet," or "an awl to eat the evening meal from a pot." It is doomed to failure. Thus, one who exalts ritual principles, though he may never gain a clear understanding of them, will be a model scholar, whereas one who does not exalt them, though he undertakes investigations and makes discriminations, will remain only an undisciplined Ru.[61]

*1.12*

Do not answer a person whose questions are uncouth. Do not ask questions of a person who is uncouth. Do not listen to a person whose theories are uncouth. Do not engage in discriminations with a person who is in a quarrelsome mood.[62] Thus, a person must first have become what he is by following the Way, and only then should you receive him. If he did not become what he is by following the Way, then he should be avoided. Thus, after ritual principles[63] are respected in his actions, you can discuss with him the methods of the Way; after his speech is guided by ritual principles, then you can discuss the principles of the Way; and after his demeanor[64] is obedient to ritual principles, then you can discuss the attainment of the Way. Accordingly, having discussions with one whom one ought not is termed "forwardness";[65] not having discussions with those with whom one ought is termed "secretiveness";[66] and having discussions but not observing the demeanor and mood of those to whom one speaks is termed "blindness."[67] Thus, the gentleman is not forward, not secretive, and not blind, but is cautious and submissive in his person.[68] An Ode says:[69]

> They are not rude, not remiss,[70]
> They are rewarded by the Son of Heaven.

This expresses my point.

*1.13*

One who misses a single shot out of 100 does not deserve to be called an expert archer. One who travels a journey of 1,000 *li*, but does not take the last half-step does not deserve to be called an expert carriage driver. One who does not fully grasp the appropriate connection between modes of behavior and the various categories of things[71] and who does not see the oneness between the requirements of the principle of humanity and the moral obligations that inhere in it[72] does not deserve to be called expert in learning. The truly learned are those who make sure that their studies keep this unity. Those who leave with one principle and return with another are men of the streets and alleys. They are expert in a few things, but inexpert in many, like Jie, Zhou Xin, and Robber Zhi. Be complete and whole in it, and then you will be truly learned.

*1.14*

The gentleman, knowing well that learning that is incomplete and impure does not deserve to be called fine, recites and enumerates his studies that he will be familiar with them, ponders over them and searches into them that he will fully penetrate their meaning,[73] acts in his person that they will come to dwell within him,[74] and eliminates what is harmful within him that he will hold on to them and be nourished by them. Thereby he causes his eye to be unwilling to see what is contrary to it,[75] his ear unwilling to hear what is contrary to it, his mouth unwilling to speak anything contrary to it, and his mind unwilling to contemplate anything contrary to it. When he has reached the limit of such perfection, he finds delight in it. His eye then finds greater enjoyment in the five colors, his ear in the five sounds, his mouth in the five tastes, and his mind benefits from possessing all that is in the world.[76] Therefore, the exigencies of time and place and considerations of personal profit cannot influence him, cliques and coteries cannot sway him, and the whole world cannot deter him. He was born to follow it, and he will die following it: truly this can be called "being resolute from inner power." Keep resolute from inner power because only then can you be firm of purpose. Be firm of purpose because only then can you be responsive to all.[77] One who can be both firm of purpose and responsive to all is truly to be called the "perfected man."[78] Just as the value of Heaven is to be seen in its brilliance and that of Earth in its vast expanses, so the gentleman is to be valued for his completeness.[79]

# BOOK 2

# *On Self-Cultivation*

## INTRODUCTION

Self-cultivation is a general theme of Chinese philosophy. Virtually the whole spectrum of thinkers and schools agreed with the statement in the *Daxue* 大學, "The Great Learning" (6), that "from the Son of Heaven down to the common masses, one and all regard cultivation of the self as the foundation." If a man cultivated the Way in his own self, the Daoists taught (*DDJ*, 54), his inner power would become real. The Ru taught that if the gentleman cleaved to the cultivation of this self, he could bring order to the world (*Mengzi*, 7B.32). What was meant by self-cultivation varied with the philosopher, but all agreed that it was vital.

The gentleman is anxious to preserve what is good within himself and correct what is bad. Xunzi contrasts the *shan* 善 "good" that teachers and friends do with the *zei* 賊 "injury" done by malefactors. In his "Man's Nature Is Evil" (23.3a), Xunzi defined "good" as what "is correct, is in accord with natural principles, is productive of tranquillity, and is well ordered." The basic meaning of *zei* is "to do injury, violence; malefaction; predatory." Ru philosophers applied it to those who are merely "useless pests" (*LY*, 14.46), who are "enemies of virtue" (*LY*, 17.13; *Mengzi* 7B.37), or who have utter disregard for the injurious consequences of their actions (*LY*, 20.2). Confucius observed that even a good quality such as love of honesty, unless tempered by a love of learning, can become an obsession that results in *zei* "malefaction" (*LY*, 17.7). Suggestive of extreme injury, *zei* is applied to assailants and murderers, to thieves and robbers, and to those given to sedition and villainy. Those who lead others astray through failing to correct them wrong them just as surely as if they had assaulted them, robbed them, or behaved in a predatory fashion against them. Xunzi believed that we must correct others when they are wrong, just as we must encourage them when they are right.

*Nurturing Life. Yangsheng* 養生 "nurturing life" consists in conserving one's vital powers to prolong physical and sexual vitality and thus life

itself. The theme was common in the third century. Quite naturally it attracted nearly universal interest since, as Xunzi remarks, everyone wants warm clothing, filling food, and a long life ("Rongru," 4.7). Though the theme of "nurturing life" was especially associated with the Daoists, its universality may be seen in such diverse works as *Mozi*, *Zhuangzi*, *Guanzi*, *Hanfeizi*, *Lüshi chunqiu*, and *Huainanzi*. Originally *yangsheng* had meant only to "care for the living" and is so used by Mencius (1A.3). But prayers for long life are common in Zhou bronze inscriptions as early as the eight century.[1] Gradually a technical vocabulary developed, and *yangsheng* came to mean specifically "nurturing life." Other terms expressed different aspects of the common desire: *changsheng* 長生 "long life," "longevity," ultimately "immortality," meaning physical and material immortality; *baoshen* 保身 "preservation of the person," meaning the visible individual; *nanlao* 難老 "to make difficult the advance of old age," implying the retardation of senility; *quelao* 卻老 "warding off old age"; and, of course, *wusi* 無死 and *busi* 不死 "deathlessness," exemplified as well in the common greeting and toast *wansui* 萬歲 "May you live for 10,000 years!"[2]

The conviction gradually emerged during Xunzi's lifetime that not only could life be prolonged but one could attain deathlessness through an elixir of life. Han Fei relates that a certain traveling philosopher visited the king of Yan, who entertained him in exchange for being taught the way to deathlessness. Unfortunately, before the ministers of the king could be fully taught the technique, the philosopher died. The king, furious, chastised his ministers for being dilatory, never thinking that he might have been duped by the philosopher (*HFZ*, 34 "Waichu shui" 外儲說, I/B, 11.4b–5a). The First Emperor, at the end of Xunzi's life or shortly after his death, made extensive searches for the elixir and sent expeditions to distant lands in hopes of finding it.

The theme of nurturing life is associated in Xunzi's mind with prolonging life and possibly with the elixir of immortality and the physical preservation of the body. In "Rectifying Theses" (18.7), to refute the Mohist notion that burials should be modest, he mentions the elaborate equipment of tombs, which motivated robbers to dig into them. His catalogue of the contents of such tombs mentions various objects that appear to be connected with the physical immortality of the deceased. Having been a student and later a member of the Jixia Academy, he was fully familiar with the speculations of the cosmologists and alchemists who flourished in late third-century China. The hope for physical immortality, if not fully realized around 275 when Xunzi was writing this book, was at least a real possibility and not the mere fantasy of frauds who shamelessly exploited the superstitions of gullible rulers. Recent ex-

cavations have made it abundantly clear that the ancient Chinese were in fact successful in preserving the body from physical decay. The tomb of the Marchioness of Dai 軑侯妻子, dating from the lifetime of some of Xunzi's students, has been excavated, and her body found in the state of preservation of a person who had died only a week or two before—without embalming, mummification, tanning, or freezing.[3] A search of the historical literature shows that on various occasions at least five other such bodies were uncovered before A.D. 650, but these reports were previously dismissed as mere fables.[4]

*Controlling the Qi Vital Breath.* "Controlling the vital breath" is the only technique that Xunzi specifically mentions to nurture life. The primary sense of *zhi* 治 "control" is "good order, well governed"; as a verb it means to "regulate, govern, control, manipulate, arrange" so as to put into "good order." As a medical term, it meant to "restore to good order," thus "to heal." This is the meaning of "controlling" the vital breath in order to preserve its good order and thus make life and good health possible. The term *qi* "vital breath," as we have seen, is a primary philosophical concept requiring different translations as the context varies. Xunzi held that it is part of all vital things since fire and water possess it, as do all living things ("Wangzhi," 9.16).

According to contemporary cosmology, refined *qi* rose to form the heavens, and the grosser *qi* sank to form the earth. In the creation of all things and in the processes of the earth, the masculine Yang principle and the feminine Yin principle had interacted with the *qi* to form all living things. Man, being in the middle of the cosmic scheme, was a mixture of both, his body of the earthly *qi* to which it returned at death and his heart and mind of the rarefied *qi*. The distinction between the *bo* 魄 animal soul and the *hun* 魂 spiritual soul expressed the division between the Yin and Yang in the human. Blood being neither solid nor ethereal, lay between them, partaking of both, and was thus the basis of man's temperament, his emotions, his qualities of mind and character. Thus, control of the vital breath offered access to every aspect of man's nature and life.

The "Neiye" 內業 of the *Guanzi* explains how this is accomplished. The "seminal essence," when present within the person, "gives life naturally."[5] It acts as the fountainhead when stored up within. "Being harmonious and tranquil, it acts as the wellspring for the vital breath. So long as the wellspring does not dry up, the four parts of the body will remain firm." You must "concentrate the vital breath until you become like a spirit and the myriad things are complete within you." This enables you to comprehend even those matters that are not easily understood even through divination or through the power of the spirits themselves. Your knowing comes "through the utmost development of the

seminal essence and vital breath." When this has been done, you can "unify your intellect and concentrate your mind" so that "though it be distant," the Way "will seem close" (*Guanzi*, 49 "Neiye," 16.4a–5a).

"Controlling the vital breath" is sometimes interpreted in a more mundane fashion as "breath control." Breath control was indeed one of several techniques thought to nurture life. Others were various sexual regimens, breathing techniques, physical exercises, and dietary restrictions, many of which continue in popular form today. Although we may be certain that Xunzi would have had nothing to do with sexual regimens, given the general abhorrence with which the Ru viewed such matters, and reasonably confident that he did not endorse physical exercises and dietary restrictions, we cannot absolutely exclude breathing exercises. It may be that "unifying the intellect" and "concentrating the mind" rested on the technique of "sitting in forgetfulness," which entailed meditation, severing the mind's connections with the limbs and body, dismissing the distractions of the senses, detaching the mind from the bodily frame, and expelling "knowledge" from the mind.[6]

The "Keyi" 刻意 of the *Zhuangzi* mentions the special terms used to designate particular breathing techniques: "To pant, to puff, to hail, to sip, to cast out old breath and induct the new, bear hangings and bird stretchings, with no aim but long life—such is the wont of the Inducer, nurturer of the bodily frame, aspirant to Patriarch's high longevity."[7] Unfortunately we do not know what technique was involved with each of these special terms.[8] But the author of the "Keyi" regarded such techniques as linked with the mere nurture of the bodily frame and not with nurture of life. As such, they were unimportant since there were men who "lived to great old age, though they never practiced Induction."

Similarly, the *Daode jing* (10) recommends: "Be intent on regulating your animal soul and spiritual soul and hold fast to unity so that it can be kept from separating. Concentrate the vital breath so that it will become soft and you will become like a babe."[9] But to try merely "to prolong life is ominous, and to let the mind try to direct the vital breath is violence. Whatever has reached its full maturity begins its decline to old age. We call these practices contrary to the Way, and what is contrary to the Way soon dies" (*DDJ*, 55).

Since Xunzi specifically links "controlling the vital breath" to "cultivating your character and strengthening your self," it seems likely that he meant something akin to the doctrines described in the "Neiye" and *Daode jing* rather than the physical breath control condemned in the "Keyi" of the *Zhuangzi*. Xunzi cites the example of Patriarch Peng 彭祖 to show the reality of longevity when one utilizes the proper method. Patriarch Peng serves in Chinese literature the same function as Nestor in

Greek and Methusaleh in Biblical literature. Confucius mentions that Peng was "faithful to and loved the Ancients" (*LY*, 7.1). It was said that he obtained mastery of the Way and lived from the time of Ancestor Shun 舜 to the time of the Five Lords-Protector, more than a millennium.[10]

*Nurturing the Mind.* Closely linked with the concept of nurturing life was the doctrine of "nurturing the mind." Here, the *xin* 心 "mind, heart" means not the ordinary brain, but the ruler of the body, the seat of nobility that urges man toward good and curbs the disruptive tendencies of the desires. Mencius (7B.35) observed that "there is nothing better for nurturing the mind than to reduce the number of one's desires." One method of doing so involved making proper use of the blood humour, the aspirations of the will, and foresight. One must take steps to conserve the vital breath that permeates the whole body and is responsible for all mental activity. If the desires are not controlled, then the vital breath is consumed uselessly in worry and fretting.

Xunzi uses the technical term *mao* 耗 "bewilderment" for dissipation of the vital breath through disorganization and lack of clear aims. Such "bewilderment" is the opposite of "control" and "order." It arises from the absence of the "unity of purpose" that he stressed in "Exhortation to Learning." "Bewilderment" diminishes the capacity of the mind and senses, producing dullness of vision and hearing with the confusion that results. It is produced by the failure to observe the natural and rational limits on behavior embedded in ritual and moral principles.

"Bewilderment" is also a technical term involving control of the vital breath. The *Huainanzi* (1.17b) points out that it is by repose, mental as well as physical, that the vital breath is conserved and retained. Persons who are impetuous in action, undisciplined in thought, and vehement in their emotions each day waste their life energy and so grow old prematurely. Excess of sensations also creates confusion and disorder because the five colors bring confusion to the eye, the five flavors to the mouth, the emotions of liking and hating to the mind, and this confusion and disorder, through the lack of control involved, cause the dissipation and exhaustion of the life energy (*HNZ*, 7.3b). Hence, bewilderment is not only unfortunate in its social consequences, it is deadly to the individual afflicted with it.

Xunzi prescribes ritual principles as the cure for bewilderment. Ritual provides the controls necessary to produce order in three things: *xueqi* 血氣 "blood humour," *zhiyi* 志意 "aspirations and ambitions," and *zhilü* 知慮 "knowledge and foresight." As Xunzi explains in his "Discourse on Ritual Principles" (19.1), ritual enables one to achieve satisfaction while preserving order within oneself and in society at large.

The "blood humour" is responsible for one's physical prowess and for the temperament that is derived from it. It is detectable as the pulse, which may be strong and vigorous or weak and declining. Although the term *xueqi* sometimes means merely "blood and breath," in this context it is best to translate *qi* by the archaic medical term "humour," which also originally meant "vapor, moisture." It is thus quite close in meaning to *qi*, and it has the advantage of a physiological meaning analogous to the Chinese. Confucius pointed out that the gentleman was careful to pay proper attention to the blood humour in regulating his behavior: "In youth, before his blood humour has settled down, he guards against avarice" (*LY*, 16.7).

By *zhiyi*, "aspirations and ambitions," Xunzi means the mental processes involved in projecting organized actions into the future and in forming a concept of their effects. These processes of projecting memory in the formation of wishes and goals were higher-level mental operations. The blood humour gave rise to the temperament of the individual. Within this, there arose the *qi* "sentiments," which might be noble or base. Music could move and stir these sentiments in men's hearts ("Yuelun," 20.1). The *zhiyi*, "aspirations and ambitions," combined intention and thought with such sentiment. The word *zhi* 志 meant "intention, ambition, aspiration," but it equally meant "memory." So, too, *yi* 意 meant "thought, intellect," but equally "intention, wish." Thus, in the "Discourse on Ritual Principles" (19.11), Xunzi remarks that sacrifice originates in the emotions stirred by *zhiyi* "remembrance of and longing for" the dead. Such processes are not inherited, but are the product of acculturation. "The people of Wu and Yue speak languages that are not mutually intelligible and have *zhiyi* ambitions and aspirations that cannot be communicated to each other, but when they are in the same boat amid mountainous waves, they rescue one another as though they were one people" (*ZGC*, 10.17b).

The highest-level mental processes were called *zhilü*, "knowing and foreseeing." These involved perceiving and recognizing, analyzing and classifying, then deliberating and pondering in order to project and anticipate future events. In Ru thinking, the Classics provided the materials necessary for perceiving and recognizing and for analyzing and classifying. In Xunzi's thinking, they, above all the *Rituals*, contained the logical categories on which knowledge of things was based. Philosophers of other traditions often rejected these mental processes. Shen Dao was "not taught by knowledge and foresight, did not recognize a before and after, but simply stayed put where he was" (*Zhuangzi*, 33 "Tianxia," 10.17b). A sagacious ruler "does not depend on knowledge and foresight," teaches the *Shangjun shu* (1.9a), but "creates unity among his people, and they

will thus not scheme after private gain." But Mencius (6B.16) inquires whether Yuezheng Ke 樂正克 had "knowledge and foresight enough" for an official position. As the *Huainanzi* (18.1b) notes, "knowledge and foresight are the doorways to fortune and misfortune; activity and repose are the pivot on which turn benefit and harm."

*Philosophical Controversies.* The last part of this book turns to the problems of philosophical argument that characterized the dialecticians of the day. Debates over the nature of language and the relation of language to reality had arisen out of Ru debates on man's nature and out of the Mohist desire to defend propositions such as "to kill a robber is not to kill a man" against the attack of opponents who disputed whether they loved all men universally, as they claimed, if they were willing to execute robbers, who were, after all, men. Mo Di himself had made a precise distinction between the words "attack" (*gong* 攻) and "punish" (*zhu* 誅) to condemn aggression and yet condone punitive expeditions such as those of the Sage Di Ancestor Yu against the Miao 苗.[11] From such Mohist argumentation, many important logical discoveries were made, and a distinct group of Mohists specialized in logical problems.

A similar movement arose out of legal discussion. With the publication of the first law codes, need for precise distinctions arose, and their absence was often exploited by clever men. The first to achieve fame for this was Deng Xi, a contemporary of Prince Chan of Zheng, who published the first law code. Later we find philosophers who specialized in argumentation for its own sake. The significance of these various disputes is suggested by the preface Lu Sheng (fl. A.D. 291) wrote to the Mohist *Canons* of logic, which he edited:

> Named entities must possess shape. No procedure for examining the shape compares with that of differentiating "shape" from "color." Thus, there exists the disputation concerning "hard and white." Names must possess evident distinctions. No distinction is more evident than that between "existence" and "nonexistence." Thus, there exists the disputation concerning the "dimensionless." The "correct" possesses the "not correct"; the "admissible" possesses the "not admissible." This is called the "admissibility of both alternatives." There are differences even among the similar and similarities even among the different. This is referred to as disputing "identity and difference."[12]

Xunzi frequently mentions these disputes but always to condemn them because they cannot be concluded. In several books, he criticizes particular disputations that he regards as vain or foolish.

*Hard and White.* Yang Liang identifies the "hard and white" 堅白 dispute with the famous argument of Gongsun Long, a contemporary of Xunzi's. Yang cites a passage from the "Discourse on Hard and White":

Is it admissible to regard "hard," "white," and "stone" [of the term "hard white stone"] as three items? I say that it would be inadmissible to do so. We may say that when the eye beholds a stone, it perceives only the "white" of the stone, but is not aware that it is "hard." As far as it is concerned, the stone may be referred to as a "white stone." If the hand squeezes a stone, it is aware that it is "hard," but not that it is "white." As far as the hand is concerned, the stone may be called a "hard stone." This being the case, in the final analysis, it is inadmissible to conjoin "hard and white" into a single thing.

Yang notes that the commentator Sima Biao 司馬彪 (A.D. 240–305) says that "hard and white" refers to the two propositions "a hard stone is not a stone" and "a white horse is not a horse." Recent scholarship suggests that the "Discourse on Hard and White" in the extant *Gongsun Longzi* is a forgery and that the original dispute concerned separating concepts that in commonsense terms were thought to be inseparable, such as the "hardness" from the stone and the "whiteness" from the horse. The view of Sima Biao is, then, probably correct in regard to this passage of the *Xunzi*.[13]

*Identity and Difference.* "Identity and difference" 同異 is one of the famous paradoxes of the Logicians, principally associated with Hui Shi, but also discussed by Gongsun Long. Yang Liang says that in the *Xunzi* "identity and difference" refers to "treating different entities as though they were identical and identical entities as though they were different." He quotes an alternate opinion contending that the "identity and difference" paradox was the same as the "similarity on a large scale and similarity on a minor scale" discussed in the *Zhuangzi* (33 "Tianxia," 10.20b). Yang Liang explains:

"'Similarity on a large scale' differs from a similarity on a minor scale, which is what is meant by 'similarity and difference in regard to minor points.'" This passage means that they are the same in that they exist in the interval between heaven and earth, which is called their "similarity on a large scale." Things all possess aspects in which they are the same, which is called "similarity on the minor scale."

"The myriad things being collectively similar and collectively different is called 'similarity and difference on the large scale.'"[14] This refers to the myriad of things as a whole being called "things." No one of them will not be the same in regard to the whole. This constitutes "the myraid of things being collectively similar and collectively different." If they are separated and distinguished from one another, the senses and faculties of men will make of them "grass," "trees," "leaves," "flowers," and other entities. Nothing will not in regard to the whole be different, which constitutes "the myraid of things being collectively different." These all take part in "sameness" and in "difference," and accordingly this is called "similarity and difference on the large scale."

*Dimension and Dimensionless.* "Dimension and dimensionless" 厚無厚 refers to yet another of the paradoxes of Hui Shi. The term "dimension" means commonly "to have thickness," and "dimensionless" "to be without thickness." "What is without thickness cannot be piled up, yet its extension can cover 1,000 *li*" (*Zhuangzi*, 33 "Tianxia," 10.20b). The idea is that things without thickness, even when piled on top of each other, cannot accumulate any thickness, this being a characteristic only of things that do possess thickness. Yet, though without thickness, such a thing can, like a geometric plane, be extended to cover 1,000 *li*. Although it lacks one dimension, the other two can be extended indefinitely to cover the whole earth. Zhong Tai argues that this paradox is more properly associated with Deng Xi than with Hui Shi since it is the title of one of his works.[15]

In pursuit of paradoxes, these men wasted their energies in vain and idle efforts. True knowledge is not attained thereby. Xunzi did not see the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake as contributing to self-cultivation. Self-cultivation must rest on ritual, which provided the model, and on following one's teacher, who kept ritual principles rectified. Xunzi's view stresses that the outcome of self-cultivation is socialization as a scholar, a gentleman, or, at the highest, a sage. It is not the cultivation of the individual self that Westerners esteem.

## TEXT

### *2.1*

When a man sees good, being filled with delight, he is sure to preserve it within himself. When he sees what is not good, being filled with sorrowful apprehension, he is certain to search for it within himself.[16] When he finds what is good within himself, with a sense of firm resolve he is sure to cherish its being there. When he sees what is not good within himself, filled with loathing,[17] he must hate that it is there. As of old, those who consider me to be in the wrong and are correct in doing so are my teachers; those who consider me to be in the right and are correct are my friends; but those who flatter me and toady after me are my malefactors.[18] Thus, the gentleman esteems his teachers, is intimate with his friends, that he might thereby utterly despise his malefactors. He

never tires of cherishing what is good. He accepts reproofs and is able to take guard from their warnings. So even if he had no desire at all for advancement, how could he help but succeed!

The petty man is just the opposite. Despite his utter disorderliness, he hates for men to consider him in the wrong; despite his utter unworthiness, he desires that men should consider him worthy. Though his heart is like that of tigers and wolves and his behavior like that of wild beasts,[19] he nonetheless also despises those who are his malefactors. Intimate with flatterers and sycophants, he is estranged from those who would reprove or admonish him. His cultivation of uprightness becomes ludicrous and his complete loyalty injurious.[20] So though he wants to avoid death and destruction, how could he help but come to them! An Ode says:[21]

> They league together, they slander;[22]
> I am filled with grief at this.
> When counsels are good,
> they all act against them.
> When counsels are bad,
> they all cleave to them.

This expresses my meaning.

*2.2*

If you employ the measure of excellence in every circumstance[23] to control the vital breath and nourish life, you will outlive[24] even Patriarch Peng, and if you use it to cultivate your character and strengthen your self, you will establish a reputation equal to that of Yao or Yu.[25] It is suitable to living in times of success and beneficial when dwelling in impoverished circumstances.[26] This measure is ritual principles and being trustworthy.

In general, when the use a man makes of his blood humour, his aspirations and ambitions, and his knowledge and foresight

> follow the requirements of ritual principles, good order penetrates every aspect of his activity. But when this is not so, then his actions become unreasonable and disorderly, dilatory and negligent.[27] When one's food and drink, clothing and dress, dwelling and home, activity and repose follow the dictates of ritual, they are harmonious and measured.[28] But when they do not, they become offensive and excessive and so will produce illness. If one's manner and appearance, bearing and deportment, entrances and exits, and one's rapid steps[29] proceed according to ritual principles, they will be cultured. But when they do not, they will seem arrogant and obstinate,[30] depraved and perverted, utterly commonplace and

savage.[31] Thus, a man without ritual will not live; an undertaking lacking ritual will not be completed; and a nation without ritual will not be tranquil.[32]

An Ode says:[33]

> Their rituals and ceremonies are exact,
> their laughter and talk directly to the point.

This expresses my meaning.

*2.3*

To lead others with what is good is called "education." To agree with others for the sake of what is good is called "concord." To lead others with what is not good is called "flattery." To agree with others in the interests of what is not good is called "toadying." To recognize as right what is right and as wrong what is wrong is called "wisdom." To regard as wrong what is right and as right what is wrong is called "stupidity." "Slander" is doing injury to an honorable man; "malefaction" is doing him harm.[34] "Straightforwardness" is calling right what is right and wrong what is wrong.[35] "Robbery" is stealing property; "deceit" is concealing conduct; and "boasting" is treating words lightly. One whose inclinations and aversions are unsettled is called "inconstant." One who protects personal profit at the expense of abandoning his moral duty is called "utterly malicious." One who has heard much is "broad"; one who has heard little is "shallow." One who has seen much is "cultivated"; one who has seen little is "provincial."[36] He who has difficulty obtaining advancement in office is "dilatory"; and he who easily forgets is "oblivious."[37] One who, though he does only a few things, obeys natural principles in organizing what he does is "well ordered"; one who, though he does many things, lacks any principle of organization in what he does is "bewildered."

*2.4*
*The Art of Controlling the Vital Breath and Nourishing the Mind*[38]

If the blood humour is too strong and robust, calm it with balance and harmony. If knowledge and foresight are too penetrating and deep, unify them with ease and sincerity.[39] If the impulse to daring and bravery is too fierce and violent, stay it with guidance and instruction.[40] If the quickness of the mind and the fluency of the tongue are too punctilious and sharp, moderate them in your activity and rest. What is so narrow and restricted that it has become mean and petty, broaden with

liberality and magnanimity. What is base and low from greed for selfish gain,[41] lift up with a sense of high purpose. What is common and mediocre, worthless and undisciplined, overcome with the help of teachers and friends.[42] What is negligent and self-indulgent, frivolous and heedless, warn against with omens and portents.[43] What is simpleminded but sincere,[44] upright and diligent, consolidate with ritual and music. [What is . . . ], make comprehensive with thought and inquiry.[45] In summary, of all the methods of controlling the vital breath and nourishing the mind, none is more direct than proceeding according to ritual principles, none more essential than obtaining a good teacher, and none more intelligent than unifying one's likes.[46] Truly this procedure may properly be called "the method of controlling the vital breath and nourishing the mind."

*2.5*

If a person cultivates his will and sense of purpose, he can take more pride in them than in riches and eminence. If he gives due weight to the Way and what is congruent with it, he will have slight regard for kings and dukes. Absorbed in the examination of his inner self, he will scorn mere external things. A tradition expresses this:

> The gentleman works external things; the petty man works for external things.[47]

Do whatever causes the mind to be serene, though it gives the body toil, and whatever causes one's sense for what is right to develop, though it diminishes the concern for profit. Serving a disruptive lord and being successful is not as good as serving an impoverished lord and being obedient in such service.[48] Accordingly, just as a good farmer does not fail to plow because of flooding and drought, or a good merchant does not fail to go to the marketplace because of occasional losses on the sale of his goods, so, too, the scholar and gentleman do not neglect the Way because of poverty and want.

*2.6*

If your deportment is respectful and reverent, your heart loyal and faithful, if you use only those methods sanctioned by ritual principles and moral duty, and if your emotional disposition is one of love and humanity,[49] then though you travel throughout the empire, and though you find yourself reduced to living among the Four Yi 夷 tribes, everyone would consider you to be an honorable person.[50] If you strive to be the first to undertake toilsome and bitter tasks and can leave pleasant and

rewarding tasks to others, if your are proper, diligent, sincere, and trustworthy, if you take responsibility and oversee it meticulously, then wherever you travel in the civilized world and though you find yourself reduced to living with the Four Tribes, everyone would be willing to entrust you with official duties. But if your deportment is insolent and obstinate, if your heart is sly and deceptive, if your methods accord with blackly impure principles,[51] if your emotional disposition is confused and vile,[52] then wherever you travel in the world, even to the farthest directions, everyone will regard you with contempt. If you are evasive and timorous, if you shun and avoid toilsome and bitter tasks, if you are cleverly persuasive and shrewdly eager,[53] adaptable and accommodating, in seeking out rewarding and pleasant tasks, if you are depraved and perverted, if you are not diligent and do not conscientiously perform your regular tasks and duties,[54] then though you travel throughout the world, even to the farthest directions, everyone will cast you out.

*2.7*

He does not walk with his hands folded respectfully before him because he fears that he may soil his sleeves in the mud.[55] Nor does he walk with his head bowed because he is worried that he may collide with something.[56] He is not the first to lower his eyes when he encounters a colleague out of fear and trepidation. The scholar behaves in this way because he desires only to cultivate his own person and incur no blame from the common folk of his neighborhood.

*2.8*

Qiji could cover 1,000 *li* in a single day, but if a worn-out nag takes the journey in ten stages, then it, too, can cover the distance.[57] Are you going to try to exhaust the inexhaustible and pursue the boundless? If you do, then though you break your bones and wear out your flesh in the attempt, in the end it will be impossible to reach your goal. But if you undertake a journey that has an end, then though it be 1,000 *li* or more, whether quickly or slowly, before others or after them, how could you be unable to reach the goal! Will you be one of those who unwittingly marches along the road attempting to exhaust the inexhaustible and pursue the boundless? Or will you rather undertake only what has an end? Such problems as "hard and white," "identity and difference," and "dimension and dimensionless" are not inherently unexaminable, but the gentleman nonetheless does not engage in debate concerning them because he places them beyond the boundary of his endeavors.[58] It

is not that performing strange and extraordinary feats is not difficult,[59] nonetheless the gentleman does not perform them because he places them beyond the boundary of his endeavors. Hence it is said:

> Learning is slow-going.[60] That stopping place awaits us. If we set out for it and proceed toward the goal, though some will move quickly and others slowly, though some will lead the way and others follow, how could we all not be able to reach the same goal!

Thus,

> moving ahead step by step and not resting, a lame turtle can go 1,000 *li*.
>
> Pile up earth basket by basket and do not quit, and in the end a high mound will be completed.[61]
>
> If you dam up their sources and open up their sluices, even the Yangtze and Yellow River can be drained dry.
>
> With one advancing and another retreating, one moving to the left and another to the right, the six horses would get nowhere.[62]

Surely the natural abilities of men do not differ so widely as a lame turtle and the six horses, yet the lame turtle reaches the goal and the six horses do not. There is no other reason for this than that the one acts and the other does not.

*2.9*[63]

> Though the Way is near, if you do not travel along it, you will not reach the end.
>
> Though the task is small, if it is not acted upon, it will not be completed.
>
> One who spends many days in idleness will not excel others by much.[64]

*2.10*

He who acts from a love of the model is a scholar.[65] He who embodies it with a firm sense of purpose is a gentlemen.[66] He who has an understanding of it that is acute without limit is a sage.[67] If a man lacks the model, he acts with rash and aimless confusion. If he possesses the model, but has no recognition of what is congruent with it, he nervously looks about, anxiously wondering what to do.[68] Only after he has come to rely on the model and then gone on to penetrate deeply into its application through analogical extension to other categories and types of things does he act with gentle warmth and calm confidence.

*2.11*

It is through ritual that the individual is rectified. It is by means of a teacher that ritual is rectified. If there were no ritual, how could the individual be rectified? If there were no teachers, how could you know which ritual is correct?

When what ritual mandates, you make so in your conduct, then your emotions will find peace in ritual. When what your teacher says you say also, then your knowledge will be like that of your teacher. When your emotions find peace in ritual and your knowledge is like that of your teacher, then you will become a sage. Hence to oppose ritual is the same as lacking a model. To oppose your teacher is the same as being without a teacher. Not to hold correct your teacher and the model, but to prefer instead to rely on your own notions is to employ a blind man to differentiate colors or a deaf person to distinguish sounds—you have nothing with which to reject confusion and error.[69] Therefore one who is in the process of learning is one who learns of ritual principles and of the model.[70] The teacher is one who makes his own person an erect gnomon indicating the proper standard of deportment and who values what is at peace with him. An Ode says:[71]

> Not from knowledge, not from wisdom,
> were you obedient to the Di Ancestor's rules.

This expresses my meaning.[72]

*2.12*

If you are straightforward and diligent, obedient and respectful of your elders, you are properly called a "good youth." If you add to these a love of learning combined with modesty and earnestness, then[73] you may properly be considered a gentleman. But if you are evasive, timorous, and shirk your duties, if you lack any sense of modesty or shame and have an inordinate fondness for food and drink as well, you are properly called a "despicable youth." If you add to these profligacy, cruelty, disobedience, treachery, malice, and disrespectfulness to elders, then you are properly called an "ill-omened youth." Although you may suffer dismemberment or death as punishment, it is entirely proper that it should be so.

Mature adults will flock to one who treats the elderly as they should be treated.[74] Successful men will congregate around one who does not place hardships on those already having difficulties.[75] If one conducts himself in obscurity and is kind when no recognition will result, then the

worthy and unworthy alike will unite about him. A person who possess these three qualities, though he be sent a greatly inauspicious omen,[76] would Heaven have wrought his ruin?[77]

*2.13*

The gentleman treats summarily the pursuit of profit but is alert to keeping out of harm's way. He is apprehensive about avoiding disgrace but is courageous in conducting himself in accordance with the Way and the requirements of reason.

*2.14*

In times of hardship and poverty, the gentleman broadens his sense of purpose. In times of prosperity and honor, he comports himself with respectfulness. When tranquil and at ease, his blood humour is not enfeebled. In times of fatigue and exhaustion, his appearance is not slovenly.[78] He does not commit the excess of snatching things back out of anger or that of giving things away out of joy. The gentleman can broaden his sense of purpose even in times of hardship and poverty because he exalts the principle of humanity.[79] He is able to comport himself with respectfulness toward others even when he is wealthy and honored because he deprecates the power and influence that accompany them.[80] His blood humour is not enfeebled when he is tranquil and at ease because he is restrained by natural order.[81] His appearance is not slovenly in times of fatigue and exhaustion because he is fond of good form.[82] He does not commit the excess of snatching things back out of anger or that of giving things away out of joy because the model triumphs over merely private interest. One of the *Documents* says:

> Nothing have which predilections create,
> Follow the way of the King.
> Nothing have which aversions cause,
> Follow the King's road.[83]

This says that the gentleman's ability consists in his use of a sense of common good to triumph over merely personal desires.

# BOOK 3

# *Nothing Indecorous*

## INTRODUCTION

We cannot with a single English word indicate Xunzi's theme in this book. The meaning of *gou* 苟 is "indecorous," and it applies to whatever is "unsuitable," thus to "unbecoming" behavior, "indecorous" conduct, "unseemly" actions. In the course of an interview with an envoy from Lu, Confucius' home state, an important minister in the royal court allowed that he was not fond of learning. When this was reported to a minister of Lu, he observed:

> The kingdom of Zhou is going to face disorders. There must be many who engage in such talk because otherwise it would not have reached into the ranks of their great men. Great men, being troubled at deficiencies in learning, have become deluded, till they say: "It is quite permissible to lack learning because a lack of learning does not produce any harm." But if a lack of learning should not cause any harm, it can only result from a *gou* fluke circumstance.
>
> (*Zuo*, Zhao 18)

In terms of difficult feats, *gou* implies that they are lacking in good judgment; in terms of argumentation, that a sound basis is missing; in terms of reputation, that it is undeserved and questionable. The *Shangjun shu* (4.14a) observes that what is meant by morality is "when ministers are loyal, sons filial, when there are proper ceremonies observed between juniors and seniors, proper distinctions between men and women, when a hungry man eats and a dying man lives, not *gou* improperly, but only in accordance with a sense of what is right." So, too, Mencius (6A.10) notes that though he loves life, "there is my sense of morality, which I value more"; if one must be given up, "I will let life go and choose morality," because "I will not seek to possess life by any *gou* improper means." When Confucius was unable to get the ruler of Lu to follow his advice, he left on the pretext of a minor slight at a sacrifice because he "preferred to be slightly at fault in this leaving rather than to appear to leave without some apparent cause *gou*" (*Mengzi*, 6B.6). What is *gou* in-

decorous is in conflict with one's moral duty, what occurs as a fluke or without cause.

Arthur Waley delineates the whole range of meanings of *gou*:

> The Chinese have a special word for things done "after a fashion"... but not according to the proper ritual. What is done in this way may seem for the moment to "work,"... but the gentleman's code, like that of the old-fashioned artisan, compels him to "make a good job" of whatever he undertakes. A temporary success secured by irregular means gives him no satisfaction; it is stolen, not honestly come by. *Gou*... is used when things are done "somehow or other," in a "hit or miss" offhand fashion, when everything is "left to chance."... It applies wherever a result is achieved by mere accident and not as a result of inner power (*de*).[1]

In this book, Xunzi characterizes foolhardy acts, sophistry, and notoriety as *gou* indecorous because they are "contrary to the mean of behavior prescribed by ritual and moral principles." In doing so, he is in accord with a long tradition amply attested in the *Analects*, *Zuo zhuan*, *Shangjun shu*, and the *Mencius*.

This book is the first of three books that date to the later periods of Xunzi's life and are related in concept and outlook. From his return to the restored Jixia Academy, Xunzi found himself faced with attacks on Ru doctrines from every direction. This in itself was nothing new. What was new, and to Xunzi very distressing, was that these attacks now seemed convincing to some Ru, who incorporated the ideas into their teachings. Xunzi regarded some of these as pernicious and wrongheaded ideas and felt obliged to attack them directly.

One of these was the concept of martyrdom to a high ideal. The vivid spectacle of men committing suicide on behalf of some principle captured the popular imagination. Men, as Nietzsche put it, demand a picturesque effect of the truth and expect a lover of knowledge to make a strong impression on the senses. Xunzi opposed such sentiments. More insidious still, and equally widespread, was the effect of dialecticians, who often created their reputations by the ingenuity of their arguments. They would sometimes maintain, just for effect, positions that flatly contradicted common sense. They delighted in arguing with such extraordinary skill that they silenced their unconvinced opponents. For some this was merely a means of showing off their rhetorical skills. A few were known to be able and willing to advocate any position on any question. These men Xunzi condemned.

*The Suicide of Shentu Di.* Xunzi cites the notorious example of Shentu Di as an illustration of indecorous conduct. Regretting that the Way was not followed, says Yang Liang, Shentu Di became exasperated and, carry-

ing a stone on his back, drowned himself. The *Hanshi waizhuan* (1.12a) says that Cui Jia 崔嘉, hearing of his intention, tried to stop him, but to no avail. Shentu Di was one of a number of semilegendary paragons who committed suicide rather than continue to live in an immoral and decaying world where merit and personal virtue went unrecognized. He is mentioned along with several other figures in the *Zhuangzi* (6 "Dazongshi," 3.3a), some of whom lived at the end of the Shang dynasty. Commentators therefore tended to date him to that period as well.[2] Liu Taigong observed that in his reply to Cui Jia, Shentu Di mentions that the state of Wu executed Wu Zixu and that Chen killed Xie Ye 泄冶, both of whom lived during the middle Zhou period.[3] The literary motif of committing suicide seems to have become popular during the late fourth century, the foremost example being Qu Yuan, who, clasping a stone to his breast, threw himself in the Milo River and drowned (*SJ*, 84.18). A number of other figures also committed suicide at the end of the Zhou dynasty. Kubo Ai suggests that Shentu was a title, meaning in the early Han period "minister of instruction." Several people with the name Shentu, perhaps deriving from an official title, were active during the late Zhou and early Han periods.

Xunzi, as Yang Liang observed, believed that "when the occasion requires that he stop, the gentleman stops; when it requires that he act, he acts; but it certainly never requires that he cause himself to wither away in starvation or to drown in the deep." Yang Xiong, troubled by the popularity of the suicide of Qu Yuan, asked in his "Essay Against Qu Yuan": "Why must the gentleman, whether he meets with the great change [the death of a sovereign or parent] or encounters dragons [good men], ever drown himself?"[4] With this sentiment, Xunzi concurred.

*The Dialecticians and Their Paradoxes.* Xunzi found the philosophers of his day bewitched by abstruse conundrums that baffled their intellect and distracted them from the serious pursuit of knowledge and from the self-cultivation that alone could make them gentlemen. Some of these men were interested only in rhetorical effect, silencing the tongues of others without winning their hearts. They were intent on rendering the intellect of others powerless, as Nietzsche complained of the dialectic of Socrates, on making them furious and helpless at the same time, and on making their opponents seem like idiots.

Xunzi would allow that some of these arcane philosophical arguments had serious import and examined abstract and difficult problems of logic. From these men Xunzi himself learned much. But too often their arguments were difficult to distinguish from the frivolous though clever distinctions that the dialecticians made to support their sophistries. Xunzi cites six such sophistries, which he associates with Hui Shi and Deng Xi.

"Mountains and abysses are level" 山淵平 is a paradox also identified with Hui Shi in the *Zhuangzi*, where it is linked with the second paradox mentioned by Xunzi, "Heaven and Earth are comparable" 天地比. It is generally thought that the purpose of these paradoxes is to indicate spatial relativity. Yang Liang says that "comparable" means that Heaven and Earth are "equal" in level. He cites the explanation of Lu Deming 陸德明: "If you take the level of the earth and compare it with that of the heavens, then earth is lower than the heavens, but were you to compare them from the heights of the Empyrean, then both the heavens and earth would appear low; If the heavens and earth were both low, then mountains would be on a level with marshes." Lu is, of course, commenting on the alternate reading of the paradoxes in the *Zhuangzi*, but Yang is correct in regarding the paradoxes as fully equivalent.

Yang also cites another explanation identified by Lu Wenchao as that of Zhang Zhan (fl. A.D. 370):

> The heavens lack substantial form. Above the earth is the Void, the totality of which is the heavens. This constitutes the everlasting relationship of Heaven and Earth. It is the mutual accord of them wherein they are comparable. Without the height of the heavens, the earth below would be destroyed. Viewed from a high mountain, the heavens still appear high; viewed from a deep abyss, they also appear low. Thus, it is said that "Heaven and Earth are comparable." Earth went away from Heaven, but whether nearby or faraway, they resemble each other. This is the meaning of "mountains and marshes are level."

A third explanation is offered by Sun Yirang 孫詒讓, who takes "comparable" to mean "close" in space: "Heaven and Earth, being opposed to each other, originally separated from one another and became far apart, yet they may be said to be close to each other, just as mountains and marshes though originally not level may be called level. All of these statements were paradoxes propounded by the Logicians on the theme of 'joining the same and different.'"[5] It is evident that these two paradoxes are also related to the statement made by the God of the Northern Sea to the River Spirit in the *Zhuangzi*: "Heaven and Earth are as small as a grain of the smallest rice, and the tip of a hair is as vast as a mountain mass."[6]

Lu Deming is certainly correct in observing that from the heights of the Empyrean the height of the sky wherein weather occurs and the height of the ground are comparable and that from such heights mountains and abysses appear level. Contemporary scholars do not agree on the significance of such relativism. Hu Shi argued that Hui Shi intended to prove the monism of the universe.[7] Indeed, Hui taught that we must "love all things universally because Heaven and Earth are one body" (*Zhuangzi*, 33 "Tianxia," 10.20b). On the other hand, Zhang Binglin (in

*Guogu lunheng*, pp. 192–94) considered that the paradoxes attempted to demonstrate that all measurement and all spatial distinctions, such as high and low, were unreal and illusory.

"Qi and Qin are adjacent" 齊秦接 is paradoxical because Qi was the easternmost country and Qin the westernmost, sharing no common border and separated from each other by the rest of the Chinese world. Yang Liang explains that we could accept this assertion were we to consider it from the viewpoint of the vastness of Heaven and Earth, which enclose them. From this perspective, they would appear to be undivided and without differences so that they could be joined together as though a single country. This interpretation links the paradox with the two preceding ones as arguing the relativity of space.

The word translated "adjacent" is understood by Yang in the sense "adjoin" and by Kubo Ai as "neighboring." Kubo Ai suggests that Qi and Qin are like a garment and its lining, which are separated by space but are "close together." Joseph Needham, however, translates "coterminous." Needham (2:197) offers the novel suggestion that "the abolition of the intervening states might bring the western state Qin and the eastern state Qi into juxtaposition." I suspect that the meaning of the paradox has something to do with the concept of the limits of space and is thus related to another of Hui Shi's paradoxes: "I know the center of the world—it is north of Yan and south of Yue" (referring to the northernmost and southernmost of the Chinese states [*Zhuangzi*, 33 "Tianxia," 10.20b]).

The paradox "Mountains issue out of mouths" 山出口 is an emendation of the text of the *Xunzi*. Virtually all commentators and editors from Yang Liang to the present agree that the six characters in the present text are excrescent and make no sense in this context. The present reading of the text, "it enters through the ear and comes out through the mouth," parallels language found in paragraph 1.9 above. Needham (2: 196), interpreting the text as it stands, suggests this may involve some epistemological consideration akin to the role of the mind in such paradoxes as "Fire is not hot" and "The eye does not see" (*Zhuangzi*, 33 "Tianxia," 10.21b–22a). It is, however, hard to see what mental operations might be involved in this "paradox," especially since Xunzi, who here is condemning it, used it as a mere commonsense phrase earlier. For this reason, it seems better to adopt the common emendation to "mountains issue from mouths."

Sima Biao interprets this paradox to refer to the fact that when you shout at a mountain, the whole mountain range responds in echo. Following this interpretation, the paradox is sometimes taken to be "mountains possess mouths" 山有口. Here, however, Needham (2:197; 3b:610)

offers a striking alternative. "I suggest, instead of the usual explanation about echoes, that it may refer to volcanoes. Mountains may indeed issue from mouths in the earth. The ancient Chinese were living on the edge of the circum-Pacific earthquake and volcanic belt; active volcanoes may possibly have been known to them." It is probable that volcanoes, possibly those in Japan, were known in Xunzi's day. They may have formed part of the geographical knowledge for which Zou Yan was famed.[8]

A. C. Graham (*Later Mohist Logic*, pp. 311–12) links this paradox with disputes about the nature of space. Commenting on three corrupt and defective passages in the Mohist *Canons*, he observes that "it would seem that there must have been sophists who built paradoxes on the assumption that a body can be regarded as filling intervals between the points on its surface. One of the sophisms . . . is a probable example, "Mountains come out of holes." One could think of the surface of the mountain as a hole in the sky, so that it descends out of the hole instead of rising out of the earth." This interpretation takes *kou* 口 "mouth" as "opening, hole."

"Old women have whiskers" 姤有須 is based on the emendation of Yu Yue. So emended, the paradox must refer either to the well-attested fact that older women, as a consequence of physiological changes after menopause, sometimes develop moustaches or to a more general, theoretical change based on sex reversals known among animals and sexual anormalies in man (cf. *Mozi*, 19 "Fei gong" 非攻, III 下, 5.16b). As it stands, the text reads "barbs have hairs," which Yang Liang attempts to equate with "frogs have tails" in the *Zhuangzi*. The *Zhuangzi* paradox involves notions of potentiality and actuality, but it is unclear what "potentiality," akin to the relation of tadpole to frog, barb could have to hairs.[9] It seems likely that the present reading is itself an editorial emendation to make the paradox present an issue of potentiality versus actuality like the paradox that follows.

"Eggs have feathers" 卵有毛 deals with the potential existence of the feathers of the baby chick already being in the egg. Everything that is characteristic of the chicken, which comes from the egg, must also be in the egg.

*Hui Shi.* In condemning the paradoxes and sophistries of men like Hui Shi and Deng Xi, Xunzi agrees with other schools of thinking. Zhuang Zhou condemned them, the Mohists condemned them, Zou Yan condemned them, and other Ru condemned them. Their objections lay more in the practical effect of such sophistries than in opposition to their logical argument. Since the sophistries of Hui Shi, however serious their original intent, seemed like the sophistical trickery of Deng Xi, Xunzi always links their names together in condemnation ("Fei shier zi," 6.6;

"Ruxiao," 8.3). Men like Hui Shi do not teach, nor do they reform; they are intent only on confounding the minds of men. The *Zhuangzi* (33 "Tianxia," 10.23a) expresses a similar view:

> Seen from the point of view of the way of Heaven and Earth, the abilities of Hui Shi were like the laboring of one mosquito or of a single gadfly. Of what use was he to anything? To be sure, he was content with his monism, which was praiseworthy, but I say that had he increased his esteem of the Way, he would have gotten nearer. But Hui could find no tranquillity in this. So he dissipated himself on the myriad things, never being satisfied, and in the end he acquired only a reputation for being the most accomplished dialectician. Alas, Hui Shi for all his talents spent himself in a profusion of efforts that came to naught. His pursuit of the myriad things, from which he would never turn back, was like trying to stop an echo by shouting it down or a form trying to outrace its own shadow. How sad!

*Deng Xi.* Less is known of Deng Xi than of Hui Shi. He was a grand officer of the state of Zheng in the sixth century. A book that shelters under his name may contain some of his views, but it is generally admitted to be a much later work, possibly even a reconstruction of the fifth century A.D. Men were convinced that Deng Xi "made it his business to raise objections" so that with his lawyerly skills he could "turn the wrong into the right and the right into the wrong" (*LSCQ*, 18/4 "Nanwei" 難謂, 18.8a). Liu Xiang says that "Deng Xi was fond of the doctrine of 'performance and title,' upheld the theory that both of two alternatives were admissible, and devised propositions concerning the inexhaustible" (Liu Xiang, *Bielu*, apud the Yang commentary).

Since "discriminations that do not agree with the natural principles of things are dissimulation and knowledge that does not agree with the natural order of things is deception," the ancient kings regarded such practices as worthy of punishment (*LSCQ*, 18/4 "Liwei," 18.8a). Thus, the legend developed that Prince Chan of Zheng, whose laws Deng Xi distorted, was forced to have him beheaded (Liu Xiang, *Bielu*, apud the Yang commentary). Deng Xi was in fact executed by Si Chuan 駟歂, who had become prime minister in 501, 21 years after the death of Prince Chan. Deng Xi developed a code of penal laws, which was inscribed on bamboo tablets and which Si Chuan nonetheless used after executing him. Later scholars condemned Si Chuan for "casting away the man whose way he employed" (*Zuo*, Ding 9). In condemning Deng Xi and Hui Shi, Xunzi followed the general attitude of his time, but that he was also aware of the significance of their arguments is shown in "Dispelling Blindness" and "On the Correct Use of Names," where he refutes some of their positions.

*Xunzi's Concept of the Gentleman.* Against the indecorous conduct caused by the doctrines he criticizes, Xunzi argues that the gentleman venerates the inner power in others, celebrates excellence, and corrects and criticizes the faults of others, but never to excess. The gentleman is able to bend or straighten as the occasion demands and knows to keep things in their proper place and perspective; thus, with every step, he doubly moves forward, whereas the petty man twice regresses. The gentleman understands that order can come only from order and so never uses what is contrary to ritual and moral principles. Thus, the gentleman purifies his inner self. His self-purification attracts those whose nature is similar to his own. The gentleman will not subject his own full and clear understanding to the delusions of others. Yang Liang explains that this "full understanding" is one that, in the words of the *Changes* (9.3a), "exhausts the principle of the natural order in the world and contains within all human nature."

*Xunzi's Use of Cheng "Truthfulness."* Xunzi adapts the concepts of other schools and philosophies to his own doctrines in this book. One of these is *cheng* 誠, an elusive concept central to the *Zhongyong*, "Doctrine of the Mean," which is generally attributed to Confucius' grandson Zisi. Xunzi's language closely parallels that of the *Zhongyong*, which may indicate a debt to the school of Zisi. Few Chinese concepts are more difficult to make precise than *cheng*. In common usage, it means "sincere," what is "true" and "real," and as a verb to "verify" or "examine." It approximates the ideas of "genuine" and "authentic." The *Zhongyong* claims that *cheng* is the way of Heaven. In order to be *cheng*, one must understand what is good. One who has *cheng* effortlessly does what is right and apprehends things without thinking. When understanding results from *cheng*, it results from our inborn nature, but when *cheng* results from understanding, it is because of education. *Cheng* is necessary to fulfill our inborn nature; it is required for self-completion; without it we cannot complete others. It is *cheng* that can *hua* 化 transform us. *Cheng* makes us choose what is good and hold fast to it. Without *cheng* there is nothing. Absolute *cheng* is ceaseless. "Only he who possesses the most perfect *cheng* in the whole world can create the fabric of the great classical pattern for the world, establish the great fundamental of it, and know the transmutations and nurturing operations of Heaven and Earth. . . . Only one as extremely quick in apprehension, as perspicacious in sagelike awareness, as far reaching in the Power of Heaven as he could come to know him" (*Zhongyong*, 32, 16, 20–26).[10] It is apparent that *cheng* transcends "sincerity" to mean what is real, the recognition of the real and the true, truthfulness about things and about oneself, and a genuineness and au-

thenticity that permit no falsity, no pretense, no illusion, no deception.

Xunzi argues that being truthful, real, actual, authentic, free from hypocrisy, the mind will be untroubled by thoughts of deceit and will constantly be tranquil. As what has accumulated within a person is manifested in his external appearance, the gentleman's truthfulness will be apparent to all. The *Daxue* (6.2) observes that "what is truly within a man will be made palpable in his external characteristics."

An individual in realizing what he authentically is and being content with his authentic nature can become obedient to his destiny by according with his nature. "Destiny" refers, in Chinese thought, both to the allotted fate decreed by Heaven and to the nature that Heaven has endowed one with and that one must authentically realize. The sage perfects his destiny so that "when he is seen, the people all revere him; when he speaks, they all believe what he says; and when he acts, they are all pleased with what he does" (*Zhongyong*, 31). Such is the *Tiande*, the Power of Heaven.

*Tiande, the Power of Heaven.* *Tiande* 天德 is an old but comparatively rare term. It is used in the *Mozi* (27 "Tianzhi" 天志, II 中, 7.10b) to show that the government of the sage kings of the Three Dynasties was beneficial to Heaven above, to the spirits in the middle, and to mankind below. "Being beneficial to these three realms, there were none who did not benefit—this is called the Power of Heaven." The meaning here is the *de* "power" intrinsic in Heaven/Nature, a concept parallel to that of the power inherent in the Way in the *Daode jing*. In the *Zhuangzi* (15 "Keyi," 6.2ab), *tiande* is associated with the character of the sage: "His spirit is calm, his soul unwearied, empty and pure, he is then in agreement with the Power of Heaven." The "empty," "calm," and "pure" mind of the sage allows him to conform to, and join with, the Power inherent in Nature, a concept developed by Xunzi in "Dispelling Blindness," where he argues that since the characteristics of the mind mirror those of the Way, the mind can know the Way, though it is silent.

*The Silence of Heaven.* In the *Analects* (17.19), Confucius remarks that "Heaven does not speak." The *Daode jing* (23) says that "to speak sparingly is in accord with Nature."[11] Xunzi applies this principle of silence or of "few words" to the gentleman. Here, too, an important Daoist parallel is to be found:

> Heaven and Earth have the greatest beauty, but they do not speak of them; the four seasons have clear laws (*fa* 法), but they do not discuss them; the myriad things have intrinsic principles of order (*li* 理) that complete them, but they do not explain them. The sage seeks the source of the beauty of Heaven and Earth

and penetrates into the intrinsic principles of all things. For these reasons, the Perfect Man acts with assertion, and the Great Sage does not create. This is called observing Heaven and Earth. (*Zhuangzi*, 22 "Zhibeiyou," 7.23ab)[12]

Nature does not speak, but men can discover its truths. So, too, the gentleman, though he does not speak, is understood.

Xunzi adapts these ideas to his philosophy through four pairs of related terms. He first pairs the principle of humanity (*ren* 仁) with the sense of congruity (*yi* 義). This connection, of course, was not specific to his philosophy but was part of the common inheritance of all schools. The ancient Chinese believed that the basic humanity in all of us expressed itself in the love of individuals (*ren*). Similarly the sense of rightness, congruity, and justice (*yi*) expressed itself in the moral principles that govern our actions. How humanity was expressed might be subject to argument, whether in universal love or love for family or self, and what moral principles should be were contested among the various schools. For Xunzi, it was a sense for what was right that put things in their proper station and gave due measure to manifestations of humanity.

The pairing of humanity and morality is developed in terms of three contrasts, between the appearance or form (*xing* 形) of a thing and the principles of its natural order (*li* 理), between its "spirit" (*shen* 神) and its "brightness" (*ming* 明), and between its transmutation (*hua* 化) and its metamorphosis (*bian* 變). Each of these requires explication.

Chinese has three words that can be translated as "change," *yi* 易, *hua* 化, and *bian* 變. Though one cannot rigidly distinguish between them, especially in common usage, differences in the graphs themselves give insight into the conception fundamental to each word.

*Yi* as a graph was originally a drawing of a lizard, the idea of change perhaps deriving from the color change of a chameleon or the rapid movements of the lizard as it catches insects. Besides color changes and changes of position, the word means to exchange one thing for another, as when the king of Qi exchanged a sheep for an ox in a sacrifice (*Mengzi*, 1A.7). As change, its meaning encompasses mostly superficial changes like those of color, position, owner, and name.

*Hua* suggests sudden and complete change, especially of substance, as the transmutation of base metals into gold. It is used for smelting ores into metals, for ice melting into water, for the digestion of food, and to change and reform oneself. In modern usage, it is employed for chemical vocabulary. The idea behind *hua* is usually well translated by "transmutation" or "transformation."

*Bian* involves changes of weather, of circumstances, of views, the metamorphosis of insects, and gradual alterations of the personality. It is

especially associated with changes of form rather than substance and changes involving rearrangement. An important usage is to "alter the laws" (*bian fa* 變法; *SJ*, 68.5), associated with the program of Shang Yang.

One cannot, however, insist on any radical distinction between these words. They could be, and often were, used in all these meanings, but the meanings tended to be specialized, though overlapping. We can see the difference in four passages: (1) "The sage alters (*bian*) with the times, but is not transformed (*hua*); he accords with things, but is not moved" (*Guanzi*, 49 "Neiye," 16.2b). Here the contrast is between the adjustments made necessary by the times in which the sage lives in contrast to any radical transformation of one's self or of one's principles. Thus, altering to adjust to changing circumstances or to new states of things is appropriate to the sage, but transformation and movement are not. (2) "A sage teaches without reforming (*yi*) the people, and the wise man acts without altering (*bian*) the laws" (*Shangjun shu*, 1.2a). Here the contrast is between *yi* "reforming the people," meaning to modify their natures, and *bian* "altering the laws," meaning a wholesale rearrangement or revolution in the laws. (3) "What makes possible transmutation (*hua*) of things into unity is called "spirit" (*shen*); what makes possible transformation (*bian*) of affairs into unity is called wisdom. To transmute (*hua*) and not alter (*yi*) one's vital breath and to transform (*bian*) and not alter (*yi*) one's wisdom—only the gentleman who holds fast to unity can do this!" (*Guanzi*, 49 "Neiye," 16.3a.) Here it is clear that *hua* refers to substantial modification of things without altering their "vital breath" and *bian* to modification of affairs without altering the conclusions, "wisdom," that are to be drawn from them; the contrast between the nature of "concrete things" and that of "events" and "affairs" is parallel to the contrast between *hua* and *bian*. Both are conceived to be more radical changes than the alteration (*yi*) of the vital breath or of wisdom. (4) "*Hua* 'transformation' is the distinguishing characteristic of *yi* general change."[13] To illustrate this point, the Mohists cite the example of a water-frog transmuting into a quail, an imaginary though commonly cited example of change that characterizes the radical, obvious change imposed by *hua*. In the Mohist *Canons*, where terminology is especially rigorous, *hua* entails "change *into*," *bian* "change *to*," and *yi* "change *for*."[14]

The concepts of "transmutation" and "transformation" are linked in the *Xunzi* with *shen* 神, understood by Yang Liang as "spirit-like,"[15] and *ming* 明 "bright." In this choice of wording, Xunzi makes use of ritual language that addresses, particularly in the worship at the altars of soil and grain and in ancestor worship, matters of the spirits. In such contexts, "spirit-like" referred to the magical efficacy of spirits, which made things happen by word or will and without evident causal mechanism.

*Ming* referred not to "bright," as light is bright, but to the sacred quality of vessels and implements used in ceremonies, where they become numinous, spirit-fraught, and thus effective. The meaning of both is thus parallel, "efficacious (like a spirit)" and "effective (like a ritual implement)" and the contrast between them is analogous to that between *hua* "transformation" and *bian* "metamorphosis." But Xunzi discounted the magical qualities of ritual and disbelieved entirely in the spirit realm. He rejected any notion of a sentient Heaven that might respond to prayers or curses. He endorsed ritual only as an embellishment to life that gave form and expression to our emotions. In the *Xunzi*, *shen* refers to "intelligence" (as in paragraph 2.4 above) or, as here, to things that are rendered "intelligible." *Ming* refers to what is "clear" or has become clear to our understanding. There is nothing magical and nothing mystical.

The third pair of contrasts is between *xing* 形 and *li* 理. *Xing* means "form, appearance" and "to appear, be manifested"; to be given visible form. *Li*, which usually means rational order or the "principle of natural order" in a thing, means here, since it is parallel to *xing*, to give a thing its distinguishing natural marks.

By persisting, things becomes easy for the gentleman because they become part of his very nature. Xunzi expresses this with two concepts, *shen* 愼 and *du* 獨. By *shen* he means "to make genuine," "to be real," "to be as one authentically is." The meaning of *du* is primarily "what is singular to oneself," thus one's innermost feelings and thoughts. Here the meaning is extended to what characterizes oneself alone, what is unique and individual. Combined, they express the singular characteristics of the individual made real, actual, genuine, in short fully, utterly, and authentically to be what one *is*.

*The Daoist Sage and Xunzi's Gentleman.* During the third century, thinkers of the Daoist persuasion developed technical vocabulary to describe the sage. Their thought is preserved in the *Daode jing* and *Zhuangzi*, as well as in the eclectic Han dynasty *Huainanzi*. Xunzi systematically adapts this technical language used by Daoists to describe the sage to his concept of the gentleman:

> Thus the sage ponders the turning and twisting of affairs and simply accommodates himself to them as they bend or unbend, lying back and looking up without possessing any constancy of outward forms of deportment. On some occasions he bends; on others he is rigidly straight. He can be humble, weak, and flexible like rushes and reeds, but this is not the result of any fear of making a decision. He can be unyieldingly strong and fiercely resolute, his sense of purpose sternly pure and noble like a white cloud, but this is not the result of haughtiness. He responds and changes with the requirements of the occasion.
>
> (*HNZ*, 13.12a)

Rejecting the Daoist notion that the sage has no "constancy of outward forms of deportment," Xunzi asserts that the gentleman must act in accord with ritual principles, humanity, and justice. This is necessary because the gentleman is a social being. His life and his thoughts are tied up with activity within society. He is unprepared to become a recluse, to abandon society, or to retreat into himself. These require that the gentleman be different from the Daoist sage, despite the qualities that they share.

The gentleman holds fast to the Way, realizing that the nature of all men is in a single man, that the beginning of Heaven and Earth are present today, and that the model of all True Kings is to be found in the actions of the Later Kings. But in stressing that the large can be seen in the small, the distant in the near, and the old in the new, Xunzi is again following a precept of Daoist thinking about the knowledge of the sage and adapting it to Ru purposes. The model of the Later Kings is one of the distinctive doctrines of Xunzi. Whereas most philosophers advocated the model of kings who lived at the dawn of history, as Mencius with Yao and Shun, or Mo Di with Yu, or Zhuang Zhou with Huang Di, Xunzi would have the gentleman scrutinize the actions of the kings of more recent history, about whom much was known. With Confucius, Xunzi advocated following the model of the Zhou dynasty. Confucius explains that he did so because the state of Qiy 杞, founded to maintain sacrifices to the ancestors of the Xia dynasty, supplied no adequate evidence for its rituals 禮 and the state of Song 宋, founded to maintain sacrifices to the ancestors of the Shang dynasty, supplied inadequate evidence of its rituals. "The cause is the insufficiency of literary records and of learned men" (*LY*, 3.9). Confucius thus determines that "Zhou has the advantage of surveying these two dynasties. What a wealth of culture this was! I follow Zhou" (*LY*, 3.14).

*Stolen Reputations.* Xunzi used the doctrine of the model of the later kings to combat the abnormal and detestable state of the world of his day, which was often rationalized by appeal to the doctrines of primordial worthies about whom next to nothing was known. When the rich and eminent were arrogant while the poor and humble starved, it could only be because the world sanctioned "stolen reputations." A world wherein indecorous conduct is celebrated at the expense of what is proper will praise such men as Tian Zhong 田仲 and Shi Qiu 史鰌.

*Tian Zhong.* Xunzi singles out these men to illustrate the general malady affecting his time. Also known as Chen 陳 Zhong (see paragraph 6.3 below), Tian Zhong was a scion of the ruling family of Qi. The Tian family had seized the throne of Qi some generations earlier, and Tian

Zhong was a relative, though distant, of the reigning king. Since the Tian family were originally refugees from the old state of Chen 陳, they were often referred to as Chen. Zhong worked in his own garden and wove sandals, and his wife made hemp and silk threads that they bartered to get food and clothing. Mencius relates that because Zhong considered his elder brother's income of 10,000 bushels to be ill-gotten, he refused to partake of it or even live in his brother's home. Instead he left and went to live in the wilderness of Wuling, where he supported himself in a bare existence, occasionally verging on starvation (*Mengzi*, 3B.10). The eccentric behavior of Tian Zhong seems based on the doctrines of Xu Xing 許行 and the Agronomists, who taught that a man should live a simple life based only on his own labors.

The upper classes were outraged at his conduct. The queen of Zhao asked of an emissary from Qi if Tian Zhong were still alive, remarking: "He is a man who does not serve his king, has neglected his familial obligations, and does not seek suitable social ties with the feudal lords. He sets for the people an example of utter uselessness. Why has he not been executed?" (*ZGC*, 4.64b.)

The king of Chu, in contrast, hearing that Tian Zhong was a worthy man, dispatched a messenger with 100 catties of gold to offer him the office of premier of Chu. Reminded by his wife that he was content there as a gardener surrounded by his books and lute and that by accepting the offer he was likely to come to harm, Tian declined the offer (Liu Xiang, *Lienu zhuan* 列女傳, 1.13ab). He developed a reputation for incorruptible moral purity, would not attend the court of the corrupt lords of his day, and would not eat food grown by others, and so supported himself by his own labors.[16] Mencius (3B.10) considered him "among the finest gentlemen of the state of Qi," but rejected his style of life as fit only for an "earthworm."

*Shi Qiu.* Shi Qiu was a grand officer of Wey during the Spring and Autumn period. He held office as court historian during the reign of Duke Ling 衛靈公 (r. 534–493). Confucius, who was his contemporary, knew of his reputation and praised him for the advice he gave the duke (*LY*, 15.6) and noted that "he possessed three aspects of the way of a gentleman: even when not holding office, he was respectful of the ruler; when not sacrificing, he was reverent toward the spirits; and though personally upright, he was able to accommodate himself to others" (*SY*, 17.10b). The reason for Xunzi's criticism is thus not evident from anything that is recorded elsewhere in the Ru tradition of Shi Qiu. Some have thought it possible that there was another, later Shi Qiu whose behavior was like that of Tian Zhong, but no record of such a person exists.

Though we do not know what specifically in Shi Qiu's conduct Xunzi found objectionable, his opinion was not unique. In the *Zhuangzi* (8 "Bianmu" 駢拇, 4.2a), we find Shi criticized for "tearing out the inner power given him and stifling his inborn nature to seize fame and reputation" by leading the world "to an unattainable ideal."[17] He and Zengzi, the disciple of Confucius, are said to have applied their efforts to excelling in matters of humanity and morality to such an extreme degree that "they cannot be called expert" (8 "Bianmu," 4.5a). Indeed, to preserve "inner power" and make it reach the high state of mysterious leveling, one must "put a stop to the ways of Zeng and Shi, gag the mouths of Yang and Mo, and wipe out and reject [the Ru doctrines of] 'humanity' and 'morality'" (*Zhuangzi*, 10 "Quqie" 胠篋, 4.12b).

The *Zhuangzi* (12 "Tiandi," 5.11a; 11 "Zaiyou" 在宥, 4.17b–18a) also notes that though Robber Zhi is quite different from Master Zeng and Shi Qiu in matters of conduct and morality, yet what they did amounted to the same thing because all of them "lost their inborn nature." Xunzi apparently agreed; in "Contra Twelve Philosophers," he expressly criticizes Tian Zhong and Shi Qiu for "repressing their emotions and inborn nature." The reputations of Tian Zhong for incorruptible purity and of Shi Qiu for uprightness were both undeserved because they obtained them not through cultivating the principle of humanity but through eccentric practices and pernicious doctrines.

## TEXT

### *3.1*

> In matters of conduct the gentleman does not esteem indecorous, though difficult, feats; in his explanations he does not prize improper investigations; in matters of reputation he does not value unsuitable traditions. Rather, only what is fitting to the occasion does he esteem.[18]

To be sure "carrying[19] a stone on one's back and drowning oneself in the Yellow River" is a difficult feat, but Shentu Di was capable of it. Nonetheless, the gentleman does not esteem his feat because it is contrary to the mean of behavior prescribed by ritual principles and by a sense of what is right.[20]

Mountains and abysses are level.
Heaven and Earth are comparable.
Qi and Qin are adjacent.[21]
[Mountains issue out of mouths.][22]
Old women have whiskers.[23]
Eggs have feathers.

All these are theories that are difficult to uphold, yet Hui Shi and Deng Xi were capable of doing so. Nonetheless, the gentleman does not prize their feats of sophistry because they are contrary to the mean of behavior prescribed by ritual and moral principles. The name and reputation of Robber Zhi are on everyone's lips,[24] and his fame shines everywhere like the sun and moon, being unfailingly transmitted to posterity just as are those of Yu and Shun. Nonetheless, the gentleman does not value his reputation because it is contrary to the mean of behavior prescribed by ritual and moral principles. Thus, it is said:

> In matters of conduct the gentleman does not esteem indecorous, though difficult, feats; in his explanations he does not prize improper investigations; and in matters of reputation he does not value unsuitable traditions. Rather, only what is fitting to the occasion does he esteem.

An Ode says:[25]

Things are in quantities
only in their proper season.[26]

This expresses my meaning.

*3.2*

The gentleman is easy to come to know, but difficult to be familiar with.[27] He is easily made apprehensive but is difficult to intimidate. He dreads suffering but will not avoid what is required by his moral duty, even at the risk of death. He desires what is beneficial but will not do what is wrong. In his personal relations he is considerate but not partial.[28] His discussions are in the form of discriminations but are not disordered formulations.[29] How magnificently he possesses all that differentiates him from the vulgar world about him!

*3.3*

Whether the gentleman is capable or not, he is loved all the same; conversely the petty man is loathed all the same. If the gentleman has ability, he is magnanimous, generous, tolerant, and straightforward, through which he opens the way to instruct others. If he is incapable, he

is respectful, reverent, moderate, and modest,[30] through which, being awe-inspired, he undertakes to serve others.

If the petty man is capable, he is rude and arrogant, perverted and depraved, so that he is filled with an overweening pride around others. If he has no ability, he is envious, jealous, resentful, and given to backbiting, so that he subverts and undermines others. Accordingly, it is said:

> If the gentleman is capable, others will consider it an honor to learn from him, and if he lacks ability, they will be pleased to inform him about things. If the petty man has ability, others will consider it contemptible to learn from him, and if he is capable, they will be ashamed to inform him about things.

This constitutes the distinction between the gentleman and the petty man.

*3.4*

The gentleman is magnanimous, but not to the point of being remiss. He is scrupulous, but not to the point of inflicting suffering. He engages in argumentation, but not to the point of causing a quarrel. He is critical, but not to the point of provoking others.[31] When he upholds an upright position, he is not merely interested in victory.[32] When hard and strong, he is not haughty. When flexible and tractable, he does not merely drift with the demands of the occasion. He is respectful, reverent, attentive, and cautious, but still remains inwardly at ease. Truly this may be called the "perfection of good form." An Ode says:[33]

> Mildly gentle and respectful men,
> only they are the foundation for inner power.

This expresses my meaning.

*3.5*

In venerating the inner power in others or in celebrating their excellence, the gentleman does not engage in flattery or toady after others. In correcting and criticizing others in blunt terms and in pointing out their faults,[34] he does not engage in backbiting or slander. To speak of the glory and beauty of his self, to compare it with that of Yu or Shun, and to place it in a triadic relation with Heaven and Earth is not to engage in idle boasting and bragging. That he bends and unbends[35] as the occasion demands and that he is flexible and tractable like rushes and reeds is not because of fear and cowardice. That he is unyieldingly strong and fiercely resolute and that there is nothing in him that has not been made straight[36] are not because of pride or haughtiness. His use of his sense of what is morally right[37] to change in response to every situation[38]

is because of knowledge that is precisely fitting for every occasion, whether curved or straight. An Ode says:[39]

> As he moves to the left, moves to the left,
> the gentleman moves with perfect fittingness.[40]
> As he moves to the right, to the right,
> the gentleman possesses what is needed.

This says that the gentleman is able to employ his sense of what is morally right to bend or straighten, changing and responding to every occasion.

*3.6*

The gentleman and the petty man are opposites. When the gentleman is bold of heart, he [reveres][41] Heaven and follows its Way. When faint of heart, he is awe-inspired by his sense of moral duty and regulates his conduct to accord with it. When knowledgeable, he understands the interconnections between phenomena and can assign them to their proper logical category. When ignorant, he is honest and diligent and can follow the model. If he is followed by others, with respect he restrains himself: when they refuse to follow his lead, with reverence he regulates himself.[42] When he is happy, he is concordant with others and well ordered in his person.[43] When saddened, he maintains inner quietude and preserves his distinctive qualities.[44] If he meets with success, he maintains good form and makes it illustrious. If he encounters hardship, he is frugal and proceeds with care.

The petty man does not behave in this way. When he is bold of heart, he is indolent and haughty. When faint of heart, he drifts into lechery and is subversive. When knowledgeable, he is predatory and clandestine.[45] When ignorant, he is poisonously malicious and given to rebelliousness. If he is followed by others, being pleased with himself, he becomes imperious.[46] If they refuse to follow his lead, he is resentful and engages in underhanded schemes.[47] When he is happy, he is frivolous and flighty.[48] When saddened, he is crushed and despondent.[49] When he meets with success, he is filled with pride and is unfair. When he encounters hardship, he becomes negligent and unambitious.[50] A tradition says:[51]

> The gentleman doubly advances; the petty man doubly regresses.

This expresses my meaning.

*3.7*

> The gentleman creates order with what is itself well ordered and not with what is itself chaotic.

What is the meaning of this? I say that "well ordered" refers to ritual and

moral principles and that "chaotic" refers to what is contrary to them. Accordingly, a gentleman creates order in terms of ritual and moral principles; he does not create order with what is contrary to them.

This being the case, were a country to fall into chaos, would he then not attempt to restore order? I say that "restoring order to a country that has fallen into chaos" does not mean that one will depend on what is itself chaotic to restore the country to a state of order. Rather, it entails leaving what is chaotic behind and reaching over it to what is well ordered. Similarly, "to make cultivated a vile person"[52] does not mean that one will depend on his vileness for his cultivation, but that one will leave behind what is vile and transform him through the process of cultivation. Accordingly, it is a case of "leaving behind what is chaotic" and not of "making well ordered what is chaotic," and of "leaving behind what is vile" and not of "cultivating the vile." The meaning of "order" is illustrated in the maxim:

> The gentleman acts in the interests of order and not in the interests of chaos, in the interests of cultivation and not in the interests of vileness.

*3.8*

When the gentleman purifies his character,[53] those of a kindred spirit join with him. When he refines his speech, those who are of his kind respond. Just as when one horse neighs, other horses respond to it [and when one cow lows, other cows respond to it].[54] This is not because of any knowledge on their part, it is because such is their inner constitution. Accordingly, that

> one who has just washed his body will shake out his robes and that one who has just washed his hair will dust off his cap[55]

is because of the essential nature of humans. Who among them could bear to subject his own full understanding to the delusions of others![56]

*3.9a*[57]

> For the gentleman to nurture his mind, nothing is more excellent than truthfulness.

If a man has attained perfection of truthfulness,[58] he will have no other concern than to uphold the principle of humanity and to behave with justice. If with truthfulness of mind he upholds the principle of humanity, it will be given form.

> Having been given form, it becomes intelligible. Having become intelligible, it can produce transmutation. If with truthfulness of mind he behaves with justice, it will accord with natural order. Ac-

cording with natural order, it will become clear. Having become clear, it can produce transformation.

To cause transmutation and transformation to flourish in succession is called the "Power of Nature."

*3.9b*

Though the sky does not speak, men can infer that it is high; though the earth does not speak, men can infer that it is thick; though the four seasons do not speak, the Hundred Clans[59] anticipate their proper sequence.

This is because having attained perfect truthfulness, they possess a constant regularity. Similarly, when the gentleman has attained to perfect inner power, though he remains silent, he is understood; though he has never bestowed any favor, he is considered affectionate; and though he does not display anger, he possesses an awe-inspiring dignity. Because he preserves the authenticity of his individual uniqueness, he is obedient to his destiny.[60] Though a man is adept at acting in accord with the Way,

if he lacks truthfulness, he will not be individual. Not being individual, his character will not be given form.

His character not having form, though he creates it in his mind, displays his intentions on his face, and expresses his will in words, the common people will nonetheless never follow him, and insofar as they must, it will be with suspicion.

*3.9c*

Heaven and Earth are indeed great, but were they to lack truthfulness, they could not transmute the myriad things. Sages to be sure are wise, but were they to lack truthfulness, they could not transmute the people. Fathers and sons naturally possess affection for each other, but were they to be untruthful, they would drift apart.

The ruler being superior in position is honored, but were he to be untruthful, he would be considered base. It is to just such truthfulness that the gentleman cleaves, and just this truthfulness forms the foundation of his government, so that wherever he may dwell, those who are of his own kind will come to him.

If he persists in it, he will obtain it; but if he gives up, it will be lost. By persisting in it and obtaining it, it will become easy for him. Having become easy for him, his conduct will become individual. Being individual and not giving up, he will be fulfilled.

Brought to fulfillment, his talents completely realized, continually progressing, and never reverting to his beginnings, he has indeed undergone transmutation.

*3.10*

The gentleman, though he occupies an eminent position, is respectful in his disposition because he realizes that the mind is small but the Way is great. Having heard and seen directly what is near him, he grasps what is far away. How is this possible? It is because of his holding on to the method.[61] Accordingly, the essential nature of 1,000 or 10,000 men is in that of a single man. The beginnings of Heaven and Earth are still present today. And the way of all True Kings is in that of the Later Kings.[62] The gentleman carefully scrutinizes the way of the Later Kings before arranging in their proper grades the various kings of earlier times, as though he were deliberating in court robes with arms folded in formal stance.[63] He derives guidelines from ritual and moral principles, makes sharp the division between right and wrong, binds together the essentials of the world, and makes well ordered the multitude within the seas, as though in the service of a single man.

Hence by holding on to what is very small, he can undertake tasks that are extremely large, just as with a short ruler only five inches long one can measure the whole square of the world. Thus, the gentleman need not leave his own house, yet the essential nature of all that is within the seas is established and accumulated there.[64] This is because of his holding on to the method in this fashion.

*3.11*

There are successful scholars, public-spirited scholars, upright scholars, cautious scholars, and those who are merely petty men. Only one who can honor his lord and love the people, who can respond to things whenever they come and manage situations as they turn up,[65] is properly called a "successful scholar."

Only one who does not form cliques with his inferiors to deceive his superiors, who does not conform to the opinions of his superiors out of envy of those in lower positions,[66] who settles disputes with fairness and does not bring harm to others by acting out of considerations of private ends, is properly called a "public-spirited scholar."

Only one who does not harbor resentments[67] against his lord when superiors do not recognize his good personal qualities and who does not accept rewards when superiors are unaware of his shortcomings, who neither shows off his good qualities nor glosses over his faults but uses

the true circumstances[68] to recommend himself, is properly termed an "upright scholar."

Only one who is certain to be honest in ordinary speech and prudent in ordinary behavior, who is awe-inspired by the model and goes along with popular customs, and does not presume to consider what is unique to himself as correct, is properly termed a "cautious scholar."[69]

Only one who is inconstantly honest in his speech and inconstantly correct in his conduct, who is partial to whatever involves profit to himself to the exclusion of all else, is properly considered a "petty man."[70]

*3.12*

Public-spiritedness produces clear understanding; partisanship produces dark obscurity. Straightforwardness and diligence produce success; deceitfulness and falsity produce obstructions. Sincerity and honesty produce perspicacity; boastfulness and bragging produce self-delusion. These are the "Six Productions" about which the gentleman is prudent. It is just these that separate sage emperor Yu from the tyrant Jie.

*3.13*
*Weighing the Relative Merits of Choosing or Refusing Desires and Aversions*[71]

When a man sees something desirable, he must reflect on the fact that with time it could come to involve what is detestable. When he sees something that is beneficial, he should reflect that sooner or later it, too, could come to involve harm. Only after weighing the total of the one against that of the other and maturely calculating should he determine the relative merits of choosing or refusing his desires and aversions. In this fashion, he will regularly avoid failure and being ensnared by what he has chosen. In general, the calamities that beset mankind are the result of prejudices and the damage they cause. If, when a man sees something desirable, he does not reflect that it may come to be detestable and, something beneficial, that it could come to be harmful, then it is inevitable that his movements will ensnare him and his actions will bring disgrace. Just this constitutes the calamity of prejudice and the damages that result from it.

*3.14*

[What other men desire, I desire also;] what other men detest, I detest also.[72] To treat the rich and eminent as a group with arrogance or to be intent on demeaning oneself before the poor and humble—to act thusly

is contrary to the essential nature of the humane man.[73] Rather, it is characteristic of wretched men who would deceptively steal a reputation for humaneness in this benighted world.[74] No threat is as great as this! Hence it is said:

To steal a reputation is not like stealing mere property.
Men like Tian Zhong and Shi Qiu are not like ordinary robbers.

# BOOK 4

# *Of Honor and Disgrace*

## INTRODUCTION

How to gain honor and avoid disgrace was the most practical advice philosophy could offer. Honor brought riches, but disgrace brought certain poverty and perhaps death as well. Since reputations were quickly made in the chaotic world of the Warring States China, and even more quickly lost, the relation between achievement and reputation became a frequent theme in literature. Words and actions were obvious factors, but philosophers differed as to which words and what actions would bring success and avoid failure. The *Changes* ("Xici," 7.17b) says: "Words and actions are the guiding force of the gentleman. The manifestation of this guiding force is the lord and master of honor and disgrace. Words and actions are what the gentleman uses to move Heaven and Earth."

Lord Shang, who reformed the state of Qin with his New Laws and built the foundation of its later conquest of the Chinese world, held that anyone "who is hesitant in the execution of his duties will be without reputation."[1] The famous general Yue Yi, a contemporary of Xunzi's, wrote a letter to King Hui of Yan, who had foolishly dismissed him and was trying to reemploy him: "I have heard that the worthy and sage-like among the lords would never lay waste to the achievements they had established and thus were written about in the annals of their country, and that prescient scholars would never ruin the reputation they had perfected and thus were extolled by later generations" (*SJ*, 80.10).

Being such an important theme, the problem of honor and disgrace was discussed in such diverse books as the *Zhanguo ce*, *Hanfeizi*, *Guanzi*, *Liezi*, *Lüshi chunqiu*, and in the works of Shen Dao. These philosophers differed with Xunzi, but none so dramatically as the "Xiaoyaoyou" 逍遙遊 (1.4b) of the *Zhuangzi*, which cites approvingly Song Xing, who "settled the distinction between internal and external qualities and explained the true nature of honor and disgrace." Song Xing argued that "he whose achievements have been perfected will be brought to ruin; he

whose reputation is perfect will be brought down."[2] This is the Song Xing who outraged Xunzi with his notion that "to suffer insult is no disgrace."[3] Xunzi believed that the desire for honor and the hatred of disgrace belonged to man's inborn nature. Song's theory overlooked that fundamental and unalterable fact. Xunzi stated in "Exhortation to Learning" (1.5) that "the coming of honor and disgrace must be a reflection of one's inner power," and here he develops the theme more extensively.

*The Technique of Proper Discrimination.* Argument, debate, and intellectual controversy within the courts of ancient China took place in a formal setting in which opponents attacked each other's positions before the king, lord, or patron. A sample of what such debates were like can be seen in Xunzi's "Debate on the Principles of Warfare," which records his debate with the Lord of Linwu before the king of Zhao. Intellectual disputes within the Jixia Academy and in the entourages of the great patrons of learning like the Lord of Chunshen were more technical in nature and were commonly called *bian* 辯, generally translated "discrimination." *Bian* refers to a logical inquiry that resolves a disputed point. The *shuo* 說 was the "explanation" that resulted. The system was well developed in Xunzi's day, having been perfected by over a century of argumentation. Opponents of this system contended that "discriminations are unable to explain" (*HNZ*, 2.12a). The Mohist logicians argued that a proper discrimination occurred when the disputants contended "over claims that are the converse of each other" as when one party contends that "*X* is an ox" while the other contends that "*X* is not an ox." There is a *sheng* 勝, "victory in a discrimination," when one side *dang* 當 "fits with the facts." Since both of two converse propositions cannot fit the facts, "of necessity one of them does not fit."[4]

A proper discrimination thus resulted in the victory of one position over the other. This "victory" indicated that one position had been shown to be valid or the other invalid. "If what is advocated [by debaters] is not similar, then it is different. When it is a case of similar, the one may contend that it is a 'puppy' while the other says that it is a 'dog.' When it is a case of different, the one may say that it is an 'ox' while the other says that it is a 'horse.' If in neither is there a victory for one position over the other, there is no discrimination."[5]

What Xunzi objects to in this book is that "discriminations," especially as employed by those who imitated Hui Shi and Deng Xi, did not result in explanations because those who pursued them were interested not in understanding but in debate. The technical term *zheng* 爭, translated "debate," has as well the common meaning "quarrel," which is

what such debates seemed to others. Similarly the practitioners of discriminations were concerned not with knowledge but solely with victory in debate. Xunzi did not condemn logical inquiry as such, only the idle exploitation of logical distinctions for startling effects and for confounding common sense. He in fact frequently used the techniques of logical argumentation developed by the Mohist logicians and exploited by the followers of Hui Shi.

*Bellicosity.* Xunzi particularly criticizes the bellicose, who allow a moment of danger to destroy everything of value: their lives, those of their family, and their service to their lord. He contrasts them with a nursing sow that attacks a tiger to save her offspring. Their error lies in their considering themselves alone correct and others entirely wrong. Others may be attracted by their "bravery" and "boldness," but in the end such behavior results in great stupidity, harm, and danger. It is not something born of delusion or disease, nor is it atavism to an animal nature; it is an extreme condition of normal likes and dislikes. Song Xing, who argued that men would not display such a willingness to fight if they could be taught that it was no disgrace to suffer insult, failed to grasp this essential point ("Zhenglun," 18.8).

Xunzi is here criticizing the knights of his day who made great displays of their bravery and boldness. It seems evident that a branch of the Ru retained the "knight" image of the *shi*, rather than the "scholar" image cultivated by most Ru. Mozi condemns this tendency in a conversation with a follower of the disciple Zixia (*Mozi*, 46 "Geng Zhu" 耕柱, 11.19a). He suggests that a number of men closely associated with Confucius proved prone to rebellion (39 "Fei Ru," 9.30ab). Han Fei specifically mentions that Song Xing's ideas opposed the doctrines of the Qidiao 漆雕 school of Ru (50 "Xianxue" 顯學, 19.9b). Xunzi considered a bellicose spirit the foundation of harm and held that the gentleman should be "without bellicosity and rancor" ("Chendao," 13.8). Rather than depend on a "fighting spirit," the gentleman relies on the superior strength of *de* inner power ("Wangzhi," 9.7).

*Society and Natural Inequality.* In the view of Ru philosophers, the nature of society is hierarchical and inheres in the natural inequality of things, but Heaven, which produced the "teeming masses," also provided an appropriate station of life that is the due lot of each. Those highest in ability, wisdom, intelligence, and inner power, by general assent, become rulers, as did Yao and Shun of old. Those of lesser talents become feudal lords, grand officers, and officials. Each serves an appropriate role in the structure of human society. The responsibilities, income, and prestige of each is commensurate with the position he

occupies. Since antiquity each office had been handed down from father to son who conscientiously carried out their duty. Office consisted of defined functions that were taught and of practical activities that would be learned independently of understanding their original purpose or their relation to other activities. Thus, we can know the model of government, even though the Three Dynasties have all perished.

When society takes proper account of the natural inequality of things, each group performs the functions appropriate to its lot. This is expressed in the *renlun* 人倫, or "constant relationships" between people. Mencius (3A.4) provides the classic expression of these: "Shun . . . appointed Xie 卨 minister of education in order that the *renlun* constant relationships be taught: that between father and son there be affection; between lord and subject, justice; between husband and wife, due separation of functions; between old and young, proper precedence; and between friends, good faith." It was thought that these constant relationships, which all men share, inhered in nature, just like the fruits of the various trees and vines. A sage knew of them and would not go against them.[6] Xunzi expands the concept to encompass the grades of men, from lesser to greater, who compose society and form its government: the common mass of humanity, who must perform the basic work of society; the lesser Ru scholars, who should be ministers and officials of the government; and the greater Ru scholars, who should be rulers.[7]

When this is fully realized, one attains "perfect peace," a concept that occurs twice in the *Xunzi*. The term *ping* 平 basically means "level," by extension, "even, equal," and thus "calm, pacific, tranquil." It also refers to the "even," normal, regular course of life in contrast to the upheavals associated with a death in the family and the mourning period that follows. The sage king, without lifting his hand, "levels" his opposition and so creates peace. Xunzi explains that in the government of the sage, the "people find joy and security in encouraging each other in the ruler's undertakings" and "imitate the frame of his mind," so that as even "rival states submit," the whole world is "unified without waiting for a decree" ("Jundao," 12.1).

*Human Nature.* Nature does not distinguish between the gentleman and the petty man. Both have similar natural talents, awareness, and capabilities. Their desires and their aversions are the same. "It is the nature of the people, when they are hungry to strive for food; when they are tired to strive for rest; when they suffer hardship to seek enjoyment; when they are in a state of humiliation to strive for honor. Such is the essential nature of the people" (*Shangjun shu*, 2.5b). What distinguishes the gentleman from the petty man is the choices he makes. Though all

men, whether a Yu or a Jie, have, according to the philosopher Gaozi 告子, "an inborn appetite for food and sex" (*Mengzi*, 6A.4), and though their eyes, ears, mouths, noses, and skins react to the same things in the same way, a Yu becomes different from a Jie through self-cultivation.

Xunzi observes that if a man has no teacher, then, since his inborn nature is that of a petty man, he will think only in terms of benefit to himself and will assume that the customs of his land and his age are proper. His mind will be just like his mouth or stomach, seeking only what is immediately gratifying. What transforms him is a teacher who acquaints him with the model, with the way of the sage kings, and with the guiding principles of humanity and justice. A petty man, though his natural disposition is to desire the best of foods, can learn to husband his resources in order to perpetuate his wealth. But he does not know how much more valuable is the pattern of life that derives from the classics of the *Odes*, *Documents*, *Rituals*, and *Music*. What is needed is a teacher to help one master them. Then one must reflect on them so that he can attain inner peace and come to love them.

## TEXT

### *4.1*

Pride and excess bring disaster for man.[8] Respectfulness and moderation ward off the five weapons,[9] for although the lance and spear are piercing, they are not so sharp as respectfulness and moderation. Hence words of praise for another are warmer than clothing of linen and silk. The wound caused by words is deeper than that of spears and halberds. Thus, that one can find no place to walk through the breadth of the earth[10] is not because the earth is not tranquil but because the danger to every step of the traveler lies generally with words. When the roadway is broad, people yield the way; when the roadway is narrow, they are crowded together. Although they have no desire to be heedful, it is as if circumstances forced them to move thusly.[11]

### *4.2*

For all their cheerfulness,[12] they perish because of their anger. For all their careful investigations, they are destroyed by their viciousness. For

all their breadth of knowledge, they are reduced to poverty because of their penchant for slander.[13] For all their appearance of personal probity,[14] they sink further into corruption because they revile others.[15] For all the fine foods they eat, they become ever more emaciated because they associate indiscriminately.[16] For all their discriminations, they do not provide convincing explanations because they are interested only in debate. Though they have an upright position, they are not recognized because they are interested only in "victory." Though they are scrupulous, they are not valued because they are injurious to others. Though they are bold, they do not inspire dread in others because they are greedy. Though they are trustworthy, they are not respected because they are fond of acting on their own.[17] The petty man is intent on behaving in these ways, but the gentleman will not do so.

*4.3*

The bellicose are neglectful of their own person, of their kin, and of their lord. Though to act in the flush of a blind rage puts life and limb in jeopardy, still they do it. This is to be neglectful of their own person.[18] Though to place the position of their household in such danger that their kin are unable to avoid the death penalty, still they do it. This is to be neglectful of their kin.[19] Even when it involves what their lord dislikes and when it is against the most extreme prohibitions of the laws and punishments, still they do it. This is to be neglectful of their lord. Below[20] neglectful of their own person, within neglectful of their kin, and above neglectful of their lord—such behavior is neither condoned[21] by the laws and punishments nor supported by the sage kings.

> A nursing sow will charge a tiger, and a bitch with pups will not wander far away.

They are not neglectful of their kin. It is only man who below is neglectful of his own person, within neglectful of his kin, and above neglectful of his lord. If only mankind were not so unlike the bitch and sow![22]

Every such bellicose person is sure to consider himself right and others wrong. Considering that he alone is truly right and others are truly wrong, he becomes the "gentleman" and others become "petty men." By these means both the "gentleman" and the "petty man" are wronged and harmed because below he was neglectful of his own self, within neglectful of his kin, and above neglectful of his lord. How utterly extreme indeed is his fault!

This kind of man is what is called "using a Hufu 狐父 lance to behead an ox."[23] Were one to consider this wisdom, no stupidity could be greater; were one to consider it beneficial, no harm could be greater;

were one to consider it honorable, no disgrace could be greater; and were one to consider it security, no danger could be greater. Why do men become bellicose? Were I to wish to associate their bellicosity with delusion, madness, disease, or illness, it would be impermissible because the sage king also punishes them. Were I to wish to connect it with something animal or bestial in such a man, it would not be permissible because they have the form and substance of a normal man and their likes and dislikes are in large measure the same as those of a normal man. Why then do men become bellicose? I am ashamed lest I, too, might share this fault.[24]

*4.4*

There is the bravery of the dog and boar and that of the peddler and robber. There is the courage of the petty man and that of the scholar and gentleman. Quarreling over food and drink, having neither scruples nor shame, not knowing right from wrong, not trying to avoid[25] death or injury, not fearful of greater strength or of greater numbers, greedily aware only of food and drink[26]—such is the bravery of the dog and boar. Dealing in transactions of profit, quarreling over goods and valuables, having no concern for polite refusals or for yielding precedence, being audacious and daring,[27] given to temerity and effrontery, greedily aware only of profit—such is the bravery of peddlers and robbers. Scorning death when filled with passionate intensity, [. . .][28]—such is the courage of the petty man. Staying with what is just, not swayed by the exigencies of the moment, not given to looking after his own benefit, elevating the interests of the whole state and assisting in realizing them, not acting to change his point of view, weighing the threat of death but[29] upholding his moral duty and not backing away from it—such is the courage of the scholar and gentleman.[30]

*4.5*

The mullet dart about near the surface of the water, but when they are netted and lying on the sand, though they may long for water, they will never reach it again.[31] Similarly when a man is caught in the midst of calamity, though he may wish he had been cautious, his wishing will be in vain. Those who know themselves do not resent others; those who know fate do not resent Heaven. Those who resent others are bound to fail; those who resent Heaven do not learn from experience.[32] Erring oneself but attributing it to others—is this not far wide of the mark indeed!

### 4.6[33]
### *The Great Distinction Between Honor and Disgrace and the Invariable Conditions of Security and Benefit and of Danger and Harm*

Those who put first what is just and later matters of benefit are honorable; those who put first what is beneficial and later what is just are shameful. Those who are honorable always gain success; those who are shameful invariably fail.[34] The successful always administer others; failures are always administered by others. Such is the great distinction between honor and disgrace.

Those who are natural[35] and honest invariably obtain security and benefit; those who are profligate and cruel invariably obtain danger and harm. Those who have gained security and benefits are always happy and relaxed. Those who feel endangered and threatened with harm are always melancholy and insecure. Those who are happy and relaxed always live to a great age; those who are melancholy and insecure always are cut down while youths.[36] Such are the invariable conditions, respectively, of security and benefit and of danger and harm.

### 4.7

As "heaven produced the teeming masses,"[37] so there exists a means through which they obtain their station in life.[38] The man who becomes Son of Heaven and obtains the whole world is the person who has most developed his will and aspirations, is most substantial in behavior springing from moral power, and has the most lucid wisdom and insight. The feudal lords who are given the various nations are those persons who govern and issue commands according to the model, who initiate projects in accord with the proper season, who hold hearings and make decisions impartially, and who are able to obey the mandates of the Son of Heaven and protect the Hundred Clans.[39] Those who become the grand officers and knights and are given cities and fields are those persons who are cultivated in their ambitions and conduct, well ordered in overseeing their official functions, and able to obey their superiors and preserve the official duties.[40] The reason that the model of the Three Dynasties still exists even though they have perished is that officers and bureaucrats[41] have meticulously observed the rules and laws,[42] the weights and measures,[43] criminal sanctions and penalties, and maps[44] and registers.[45] This has been accomplished even when they no longer understood the meaning because they conscientiously safeguarded the calculations[46] and out

of prudence never presumed either to increase or diminish them. Rather, they handed them from father to son in order to aid the king or duke.[47] This is the reason they are given emoluments and ranks. The commoners obtain warm clothing, filling food, and a long life. They see many days[48] through avoiding the death penalty by being filial, by respecting their elders, by being attentive, diligent, restrained, controlled,[49] and quick in exerting themselves, and by earnestly executing[50] their tasks and duties and not daring to be indolent or haughty. Traitors get into danger, fall into disgrace, and face execution because they cloak pernicious doctrines in beautiful language, present treacherous statements in elegantly composed form, perform strange feats, spread false rumors,[51] are given to boasting, break in and rob, act in profligate, cruel, proud, and haughty fashion,[52] and turn from one side to another during chaotic times in an attempt to save their lives. They are imperiled because their reflections are not deep, their choices are not carefully made, and their decisions regarding what should be chosen and what refused are defective or haphazard.

*4.8*

In natural talent, inborn nature, awareness, and capability, the gentleman and the petty man are one. In cherishing honor and detesting disgrace, in loving benefit and hating harm, the gentleman and the petty man are the same. Rather, it appears that the Way they employ to make their choices produces the difference. The petty man is eager to make boasts, yet desires that others should believe in him. He enthusiastically engages in deception, yet wants others to have affection for him. He conducts himself like an animal, yet wants others to think well of him. When he reflects on something, it is understood only with difficulty. When he acts in regard to something, it is difficult for him to make it secure. When he tries to sustain something, he has difficulty establishing it. In the end,[53] he is certain to fail to obtain what he loves and sure to encounter what he hates.

Accordingly, the gentleman is trustworthy and so desires that other men should trust him as well. He is loyal and so wants other men to have affection for him. He cultivates rectitude and makes orderly his management of situations,[54] and so desires that others should think well of him. When he reflects on something, it is easily understood. When he acts, it is easy for him to make it secure. When he tries to sustain something, it is easily established. In the end, he is certain to obtain what he loves and sure not to encounter what he hates. For these reasons, when he is unsuccessful in seeking office, he will not live in obscurity; when he is success-

ful, he will become greatly illustrious; and when he dies, his reputation will be still more extensively declared.

The petty man, craning his neck and standing on tiptoes, wishfully remarks: "In awareness, thought, ability, and inborn nature, I certainly possess the characteristics of a Worthy." He does not realize that if there are no differences between him and other men, then it must be that the gentleman concentrates on devising plans[55] that are suitable to the occasion, whereas the petty man concentrates on transgressing what is appropriate. Thus, a thorough investigation of the awareness and capacity of the petty man is sufficient to make one aware that he possesses more than he appears to and that he could do what the gentleman does do. Consider the fact that though the native of Yue is content with Yue and the native of Chu with Chu, the gentleman is content only with Xia.[56] This is not because of any difference in awareness, capacity, talent, or inborn nature, but, rather, the differences are because of the moderating influence of what they concentrate on in laying plans and of the habits instilled by their customs.[57]

Conduct marked by humanity, justice, and inner power is normally the method of assuring safety, but there is no necessity that it will never involve peril. Conduct marked by baseness and recklessness,[58] and breaking in and robbing others are normally methods involving peril, but there is no necessity that they will never produce security. Therefore it is said:[59]

> The gentleman is led by the normal, but the petty man is led by the exceptional.[60]

*4.9*

All men possess one and the same nature: when hungry, they desire food; when cold, they desire to be warm; when exhausted from toil, they desire rest; and they all desire benefit and hate harm. Such is the nature that men are born possessing. They do not have to await development before they become so. It is the same in the case of a Yu and in that of a Jie. The eye distinguishes white from black, the beautiful from the ugly. The ear distinguishes sounds and tones as to their shrillness or sonority.[61] The mouth distinguishes the sour and salty, the sweet and bitter. The nose distinguishes perfumes and fragrances, rancid and fetid odors. The bones, flesh, and skin-lines[62] distinguish hot and cold, pain and itching. These, too, are part of the nature that man is born possessing,[63] that he does not have to develop, and that is true of both Yu and Jie.

Whether a man can become a Yao or Yu or be a Jie or Robber Zhi,

whether he becomes a workman or artisan, a farmer or merchant, lies entirely with the accumulated effect of circumstances,[64] with what they concentrate on in laying their plans, and on the influence of habits and customs.[65] If one becomes a Yao or Yu, one normally enjoys tranquillity and honor; if one is a Jie or Robber Zhi, one normally falls into peril and disgrace. If one becomes a Yao or Yu, one constantly finds enjoyment and ease; if one becomes a workman, artisan, farmer, or merchant, one must constantly toil and trouble oneself. Though this is so, many[66] men are like the latter, but only a few men are like the former. Why should this be so? I say that it is because they remain uncultivated; even Yao and Yu were not born wholly what they became, but rose up by transforming their old selves, brought them to perfection through cultivation and conscious exertion, and only after first putting forth the utmost effort did they become complete.[67]

*4.10*

The inborn nature of man is certainly that of the petty man.[68] If he is without a teacher and lacks the model, he will see things solely in terms of benefit to himself. As the nature of man is assuredly that of the petty man, if the age in which he lives is chaotic, he will acquire its chaotic customs. For this reason, he will use the small to redouble what is small and use the chaotic to begat more chaos.[69] If the gentleman does not use the power inherent in his circumstances to control them, then he will have no means to develop their inherent possibilities. Now the mouth and stomach of a man can only lead to smacking and chewing away, feasting and gorging himself to satisfaction.[70] How can they be aware of ritual principles and his moral duty? Or know when to offer polite refusals or to yield precedence? Or know shame more keenly or sharpen what he accumulates?[71] If a man lacks a teacher and the model, then his mind will be just like his mouth and stomach.

Now if a man were caused to live without ever having tasted the meat of pastured and grain-fed animals[72] or rice and millet, but knew only beans, coarse greens, dregs and husks, then he would be satisfied with such food. Were there suddenly to arrive a platter filled with the finest and most delicate of meats, he would look at them with astonishment and exclaim: "What strange things!" But since when savored, they are not unpleasing to the nose;[73] when tasted, they are sweet to the mouth; and when eaten, they are satisfying to the body, everyone who tries them will reject their old foods and choose these new ones instead.

Consider the way of the Ancient Kings and the guiding principles of humanity and justice. Are they not the means by which we live together

in societies, by which we protect and nurture each other, by which we hedge in our faults[74] and refine each other, and by which together we become tranquil and secure? Consider then the way of Jie and Robber Zhi. Does it not contrast with that of the Ancient Kings just as the meat of pastured and grain-fed animals contrasts with dregs and husks![75] Though this is so, many[76] men still become like them and few like the Ancient Kings. Why is this? I say: They are uncultivated rustics. A lack of cultivation is a misfortune common to the whole world; it is the greatest calamity for man and does him the greatest harm. Anciently it was said:

> The humane man delights in proclaiming and manifesting it to others.[77]

If it is proclaimed and manifested, smoothed and polished,[78] imitated and repeated,[79] then the myopic will suddenly become comprehensive, the uncultivated suddenly refined,[80] and the stupid suddenly wise. If this could not be done, though a Tang or Wu held supreme power, what advantage would result, and though a Jie or Zhou Xin held supreme power, what damage could they cause? But when Tang and Wu lived, the world followed them and order prevailed, and when Jie and Zhou Xin lived, the world followed them and was chaotic. How could this be if such were contrary to the essential nature of man because certainly it is as possible for a man to be like the one as like the other?

*4.11*

It is the essential nature of man that for food he desires the meat of pastured and grain-fed animals, that he desires clothing decorated with patterns and brocades, that to travel he wants a horse and carriage, and even that he wants wealth in the form of surplus money and hoards of provisions so that even in lean periods stretching over years, he will not know insufficiency.[81] Such is the essential nature of man.

Now in real life, though a man knows how to raise chickens, dogs, pigs, and swine as well as oxen and sheep, when he eats he dares not have wine and meat. Though he has surplus knife- and spade-shaped coins and stores in cellars and storehouses, he does not presume to dress in silk. Though the miser has treasures deposited in boxes and trunks,[82] he dares not travel by horse and carriage. Why is this? Not that men do not desire to do this, but[83] because, considering the long view of things and thinking of the consequences of their actions, they are apprehensive that they may lack means adequate to perpetuate their wealth. In this way, they, too, moderate what they expend and control[84] what they desire, harvesting, gathering, hoarding, and storing up goods in order to perpetu-

ate their wealth. In itself is not this "considering the long view of things and thinking of the consequences" something quite excellent indeed! Now, the sort of person who lives in a haphazard manner and is only superficially aware of things does not grasp even this. So he consumes his provisions in an utterly extravagant manner,[85] not considering the consequences, and suddenly he finds himself forced into difficult straits and impoverished. This is why he will freeze, starve, be reduced to holding a begging gourd and sack, and will wind up as a skeleton lying in a drainage ditch.[86]

How much more important, then, are the way of the Ancient Kings, the guiding principles of humanity and justice, and the pattern of life[87] given in the *Odes*, *Documents*, *Rituals*, and *Music*; they certainly contain the most important thoughts in the world. They will cause anyone born to the world to consider the long view of things and think of the consequences, thereby protecting a myriad of generations. Their influence is eternal, their accumulated wisdom to be reanimated is substantial, and their achievements and accomplishments stretch far and wide.[88] None but those who have thoroughly cultivated themselves through conscious exertion so as to become gentlemen can be wise. There is the ancient saying:

> You cannot draw water from a deep well with a short rope. One whose knowledge is not intimately detailed cannot have words with the perfected sage.[89]

The patterns of life given in the *Odes*, *Documents*, *Rituals*, and *Music* are certainly opposed to what the common lot of men know about. Thus, it is said:

> Concentrate your mind on them, and you can master them twice over. Possess them, and you can follow them forever. Broaden them, and you can be successful in office. Reflect on them, and you can attain inner peace. Repeat, imitate, and investigate them, and you will love them all the more.

If you use them to bring order to your essential nature, you will benefit. If you employ them to make a name for yourself, you will gain honor. If you use them in the company of others, you will become concordant with them. If you employ them when you are alone, you will be satisfied. What could bring greater joy to your intellect than this!

*4.12*

To be as honored as the Son of Heaven and to be as wealthy by possessing the whole world—this natural human desire is shared by all men

alike. But if all men gave free rein[90] to their desires, the result would be impossible to endure, and the material goods of the whole world would be inadequate to satisfy them. Accordingly, the Ancient Kings acted to control them with regulations, ritual, and moral principles, in order thereby to divide society into classes, creating therewith differences in status between the noble and base, disparities between the privileges of age and youth, and the division of the wise from the stupid, the able from the incapable. All of this caused men to perform the duties of their station in life and each to receive his due; only after this had been done was the amount and substance of the emolument paid by grain[91] made to fit their respective stations. This indeed is the Way to make the whole populace live together in harmony and unity.

Accordingly, when a humane man occupies the highest position, farmers labor with all their energy to exhaust the potential of their fields, merchants scrutinize with keen eyes to get the utmost from their goods, the various artisans use their skills to the fullest in making utensils and wares, and the officials, from the knights and grand officers up to the feudal lords, all execute fully the functions of their offices with humanity, generosity, wisdom, and ability. This may be called "perfect peace." So though one may have as his emolument the whole world, he need not consider it excessive, and though one be only a gatekeeper, receptionist, guard, or nightwatchman,[92] he need never think his salary too meager. Anciently it was said:[93]

> Unequal yet equivalent, bent yet obedient, not the same yet uniform.[94]

This refers to the constant relationships of mankind. An Ode says:[95]

> He received the large and small *gong* 共 jade regalia,[96]
> and thus was thought truly great by the states below him.[97]

This expresses my meaning.[98]

# BOOK 5

# *Contra Physiognomy*

## INTRODUCTION

The Chinese version of physiognomy included not only determining a person's character from his physical appearance but also foretelling his future. It was but one of many pseudo-scientific beliefs that purported to be "techniques of destiny." Prognostication by scapulimancy and milfoil lots and by the trigrams of the *Changes* were ancient in Xunzi's day and were widely respected. But these concerned affairs of state and matters of war, harvests, and weather, not matters of individual destiny. Individuals, apart from kings and certain other royal persons, were not proper subjects.[1] The same is largely true of astrology, which flourished in Xunzi's day, as is amply documented in the *Lüshi chunqiu*.[2] Bound, as these matters were, with known facts of astronomy and equally explained by the same intellectual constructs, it was difficult to challenge the astrological element without simultaneously condemning the astronomical truths embedded in the same system.[3] Another system that was developing as Xunzi wrote this book was geomancy, defined by Herbert Chatley as: "the art of adapting the residences of the living and the dead so as to cooperate and harmonize with the local currents of the cosmic breath [*qi* 氣]."[4] Its theoretical origins can be seen in the *Guanzi* in passages dating from perhaps the fourth century, but it does not appear to have been well developed until the first century A.D., when Wang Chong criticized it.[5]

*Physiognomy*. The origins of physiognomy are unknown. In the seventh century, Bole 伯樂, a retainer of Duke Mu of Qin (r. 659–621), became famous for his ability to judge horses by physiognomizing their features (*HNZ*, 12.9a). Han Fei (50 "Xianxue," 19.11a) remarks that "if one only looks at the teeth and surveys the general shape of the horse, then even Bole could not be sure of the quality of the horse." Bole judged the quality of a horse by physiognomizing it on the basis of its shape, appearance, tendons, and bones (*HNZ*, 12.9a). So expert was he that a

merchant once increased the price of his horse tenfold merely by having Bole look it over once and look back at it as he left (*ZGC*, 9.8b). Xunzi, like most of his contemporaries, regarded Bole as a paragon who could not be deceived when it came to horses, just as the gentleman could not be deceived concerning men.[6] "Prince Ao of Lu 魯公孫敖 had his sons physiognomized by Shufu 叔服, historiographer of the royal court, who concluded: Your son Gu 穀 will feed you. Your son Nan 難 will bury you. The lower part of Gu's face is large, so he is sure to have posterity in the state of Lu" (*Zuo*, Wen 1).

Physiognomy here offered the possibility of knowing one's future and the future of one's children. Kings could determine which ministers would prove helpful and which dangerous. Xunzi singled out physiognomy for special condemnation because it involved individuals rather than matters of state. He was perhaps also sensitive to the criticisms that Mozi and his followers had made of the fatalism adopted by some early Ru.

Xunzi mentions that in the past Gubu Ziqing 姑布子卿 had physiognomized Confucius during the latter's visit to the state of Wey.[7] Gubu recognized immediately that Confucius was a sage. Regarding Confucius as he walked 50 paces to meet him and then following Confucius for 50 paces, Gubu asked who this remarkable man was. Told that he was Confucius from Lu, he allowed that he had heard of him (*HSWZ*, 9.9a). Asked how Confucius impressed him, he responded: "He has the forehead of a Yao, the eyes of a Shun, the neck of a Yu, and the beak-like nose of a Gaoyao 皐陶. Viewed from the front, he is so perfect that he resembled those who possess territory. From the rear, he has high shoulders and a weak back; only in this regard does he not equal those four sages."[8] Gubu added that Confucius was like a "dog in the house of a family in mourning,"[9] that he was not hated because of his sunken face, and that it was because of his beak of a nose, which was like a bulrush, that no ruler had availed himself of Confucius' talents.[10] When this was reported to Confucius, he responded that the bodily form and facial appearance are of little importance.[11] In this he agreed with Xunzi.

The doctrine that the destiny of a person could be read in his physical form reached a high point during Xunzi's lifetime. A traveling physiognomist, Tang Ju, correctly foretold that Li Dui would become dictator of Zhao (*SJ*, 43.67–68; *HFZ*, 21 "Yu *Lao*" 喻老, 7.1b) and that Cai Ze would live for 43 more years and would become prime minister of Qin (*SJ*, 79.34–35). The marvelous accuracy of these two predictions stunned the intellectual world and gave credence to the doctrine. Testimony to the remarkable interest created in physiognomy is the list of 24

books on the subject to be found in the catalogue to the Han Imperial Library. For these reasons, Xunzi felt compelled to refute its claims and to demonstrate that there was nothing of substance in physiognomy. Any prediction that came true was the result of mere chance. The methods of physiognomy could not produce consistent results.

More important still, physiognomy distracted men with its emphasis on the mere external form of a man. What was vastly more important in Xunzi's view was his mind. Of still greater importance were the methods because they lead the man to great accomplishment. These are what should be examined. Xunzi believed that in the age of the sage kings of antiquity, doctrines such as physiognomy could not have existed since men would then have never paid attention to such foolishness. By paying attention to height, size, or weight, we cheat ourselves and cause others to scorn us.

Those who are concerned with mere external superficialities forget the examples of Jie and Zhou Xin, who, though attractive and handsome, lost their kingdoms and came to be regarded as the greatest of villains. Their failures were the result not of their looks but of the baseness of the things they discussed. The untutored masses who place high regard on fashionable attire are as naive as infatuated young girls. That such men end in disaster arises not from their looks but from the uselessness and incompleteness of what they value.

*History as the Refutation of Physiognomy.* To confute the claims of the physiognomists, Xunzi cites many examples from history intended to show that since human characteristics are randomly distributed among men, good and bad, it is impossible to judge a man or predict his fate from his looks. Most of Xunzi's examples were stock figures drawn from the rhetorical traditions of his times—men like Confucius and the Duke of Zhou compared with Jie and Zhou Xin. Others were figures then well known, but now so obscure that the full force of Xunzi's point is lost. Three others are of interest because all were associated with the history of Chu, where Xunzi was teaching at Lanling when he wrote his book: King Yan of Xu 徐偃王; Sunshu Ao 孫叔敖; and the Duke of She 葉公.

*King Yan of Xu.* Of these, King Yan is the most obscure, partly because of the conflicting testimony of the various sources and commentaries. According to Han Fei, King Yan of Xu ruled a territory of 500 square *li* located east of the Han river. His government was so humane and just that 36 states ceded territory and paid him court visits.[12] King Wen of Chu 楚文王 (r. 689–671), fearing that King Yan would cause him harm, raised his armies, attacked, and destroyed him. According to the

*Shiji* (5.6–8), however, when King Mu of Zhou (r. 956–923) was inspecting his lands in the far west, it became necessary for him to return by forced marches to meet the revolt of King Yan of Xu. Because of the urgency of the threat, his charioteer, Zaofu, drove the magnificent steeds of the king's chariot a distance of 1,000 *li* per day, for which accomplishment he was awarded a fief. As long ago as Qiao Zhou 譙周 (fl. A.D. 200–270), in his *Gushi kao* 古史考, it was noted that these two stories are incompatible, that even the historical tables of the *Shiji* list King Wen of Chu ruling 318 years after King Mu and that the *Shiji* story is obviously mythological.[13] We may be sure that Xunzi refers to the same King Yan as his student Han Fei.

*Sunshu Ao.* In common with other philosophers of the late Warring States period, Xunzi thought of Sunshu Ao as a model minister. But little is known of his career. He is only briefly mentioned in the *Zuo zhuan*, which provides the most detailed record of the period. He was premier of Chu under King Zhuang and established his reputation by diverting the waters of the Qisi into the wilderness of Yunlou, thereby causing the king to think him worthy of being premier.[14] During the twelve years he held office, the king of Chu became lord-protector. It is related in the *Zhuangzi* (21 "Tian Zifang" 田子方, 7.21a) that he was thrice appointed to office and thrice removed during his career. He predeceased the king (*HNZ*, 18.2a). His conversation in the *Zhuangzi* (24 "Xu Wugui" 徐無鬼, 8.16b) with Confucius may be dismissed as legend.

*The Duke of She.* Prince Gao 子高, the Duke of She, also known as Shen Zhuliang 沈諸梁, was most famous for suppressing the revolt of the Duke of Bo 白公. His career spanned the years 523 to 475. The duke was an important figure of his time, and when engaged in the pacification of Cai, he had a famous interview with Confucius and his disciples, probably about 493. Confucius had reason to think that the duke was one of the feudal lords of the day who would be sympathetic to his views.[15]

The revolt of the Duke of Bo was one of the most famous events of the late Spring and Autumn period. The main figures were the high nobility of Chu. Prince Xi 子西, Gongsun Shen 公孫申, the premier, was a son by a senior concubine of King Ping 楚平王. Prince Qi 子期, the minister of war, was also a son of King Ping. The Duke of Bo was the son of the crown prince of Chu and the grandson of King Ping. Having been forced into exile with his father by slanderers in the royal court, he sought revenge on his royal relatives. He plotted to raise 500 men to attack the king, premier, and minister of war, but this could not be accomplished. He next approached a strong man with his scheme but was rebuffed. Finally, an incursion by a raiding party from Wu provided the pretext to

raise forces. Having defeated the raiders, he then asked that he be permitted to offer the spoils to the court. Once there, he raised an insurrection, killed both the premier and the minister of war, and took King Hui prisoner. He was advised to burn the treasury and murder the king, but refused: "To murder the king would be inauspicious. And if I burn the treasury, I would have no stores. With what should I then maintain myself?" At this time, the Duke of She was still in Cai, where he was advised to advance on the capital, but he demurred. Later when he heard that the Duke of Bo had put Guan Xiu 管修, a descendant of Guan Zhong, to death, he knew that the time was ripe and proceeded to advance toward the capital.

In the interim, the Duke of Bo tried to force Prince Lu 楚王子閭 to become king, but he refused, and the duke had him removed. Therewith the duke put him to death and went for the king, who was kept in the treasury. But a retainer had surreptitiously dug through the wall and carried the king on his back to the palace of the queen dowager. At this juncture, the Duke of She arrived, attacked the Duke of Bo, defeated him, and crushed his rebellion. The Duke of Bo committed suicide, and his retainers were boiled. Having brought peace to Chu, the Duke of She became both premier and minister of war while order was being completely restored. He then resigned the office of premier, which he turned over to Prince Xi's son, and the office of minister of war, which he turned over to Prince Qi's son. He retired to She, where he spent his old age. By his actions, the Duke of She saved his country and preserved its royal house. In the code of his day, he exemplified at its finest the loyal behavior of a minister (*Zuo*, Zhao 19–20, Ding 5, Ai 4, 16–17). As such he was celebrated by philosophers.

Whereas Sunshu Ao and the Duke of She should be regarded as historical persons whose career and accomplishments were real and well known, other "ministers" from the hoary past must be regarded as paragons whose accomplishments are legend, even though they may have been real persons and not fictions. In this book, we encounter a group of four such paragons, the good ministers who assist the good first king in founding the dynasty and securing the Mandate of Heaven to rule: Gaoyao; Hongyao 閎夭; Fuyue 傅說; and Yi Yin (see Vol. 2 for a discussion of their putative role in the development of ancient Chinese society).

*The Scheme of Ancient History.* By the late Warring States period, antiquity had been divided into four main periods: the eras of the Three Huang August Ones 三皇, the Five Di Ancestors 五帝, the Three Dynasties 三代, and the Five Lords-Protector 五霸.[16] The age of the Three August Ones stretched back to the very beginnings of human society. Xunzi

mentions in "Rectifying Theses" (18.6) Taihao 太昊 (= Fuxi 伏羲) and Suiren 燧人, two figures who existed in this primordial time. Contemporary works such as the encyclopedic *Lüshi chunqiu* mention the age of the Three August Ones, and its omission in the *Xunzi* is chance. The Three Dynasties are mentioned in "Of Honor and Disgrace" ("Rongru," 4.7) and the Five Lords-Protector are the major theme of "On Confucius." "Of Kings and Lords-Protector" contrasts the lords-protector unfavorably with the True Kings of antiquity.

In Xunzi's day the Ru found themselves subjected to two lines of attack on historical grounds. Radical primitivists and utopians harked back to the age of the August Ones to criticize the government of later times, arguing for a continuous devolution of society from the Golden Age. Ru scholars, who argued for the restoration of the government of the sages, found these attacks disconcerting. Revolutionary philosophies, which contended that a total transformation of the structure of government was necessary, argued that since the present is different from the past, we must depart from the methods of the sage kings of antiquity.

Xunzi noted that stupid men and fools can be deceived about almost anything, but the sage cannot. To teach that we must neglect the past because it differs from the present, as did his students Han Fei and Li Si, is foolish. By keeping each thing to its proper class, however different the time, however long the elapsed interval, conclusions will be valid because things of the same class share an identical principle of order. This is what the gentleman pursues. Thus, though the details of the past are lost because of the extreme antiquity involved, we can understand what is important because we have a standard of measurement. Against the primitivists and others who advocated a return to the model of extreme antiquity, Xunzi argues (in 5.4 below) that we should follow the Later Kings, who founded the Zhou dynasty.

*Persuasions and Discriminations.* Xunzi argues in this book that observing the forms and rules of persuasions 說 and discriminations 辯 is not enough. One's conclusions must correspond with the truths that we have inherited from the past and that are embedded in ritual and moral principles. The gentleman must engage in discriminations not only because he must compete with others in court, but because he loves the good they develop and the refinements of form they bring to his life. Without discussion of ritual, morality, the lessons of antiquity, and the model of the sages, life would be inescapably base, common, and vulgar.

The view Xunzi held was common in aristocratic ancient China. According to the *Zuo zhuan* (Xi 24), "words are the embellishment of the person." Confucius discussed (*Zuo*, Xiang 25) the skill of Prince Chan,

prime minister of Zheng, in argument and literary compositions: "There is an ancient saying: 'Words are to give adequate expression to one's thoughts and compositions are to provide adequate form to one's words.' If there were no words, how could anyone know your thoughts and intentions; and if there were no form to compositions, one's words, though given expression, would not penetrate far." With such consummate skill, Prince Chan was able to save his country through the power of his oratory. Almost alone among ancient Chinese thinkers, Xunzi appreciated and celebrated the aesthetic quality of life. It was no idle adornment, no mere distraction, as the Mohists thought; it inhered in all self-cultivation and all self-improvement. Without such beauty, life is concerned with bare actualities and becomes, as the *Changes* say, "a tied sack."

Philosophers of Xunzi's day had considerable difficulty in persuading rulers to follow the dictates of ritual, observe the requirements of justice and humanity, and emulate the model of the sage kings. Han Fei devoted four books to an exposition of the problems. He observed (3 "Nanyan" 難言, 1.7b–8a): "If one discusses contemporary affairs in language that is not disrespectful and offensive, he appears to be interested only in preserving his own life and in toadying after his superiors; if he discusses distant customs and matters that seem weird or fantastic to ordinary experience, he appears to be given to exaggerated and extravagant statements."

The difficulties faced by the philosopher are clearly illustrated by the case of the Lord of Shang, who, when he discussed the way of kings that he had been taught, got nowhere with the Duke of Qin, but when he discussed how to become powerful and rich, the duke made him prime minister. The gentleman, Xunzi taught, overcame these problems not by pandering to the whims of rulers, but by acting as the standard of measurement and by adhering to the universal method.

*Man and Animals.* In this book, probably because of the confused order of the paragraphs between Books 3–5 (see Appendix B), Xunzi returns to the problem of man's inborn nature. What distinguishes man from the animals is not his external characteristics, but his ability to draw distinctions and to make discriminations. This ability enables him to give good and proper form to his behavior through ritual principles, which he alone can conceive. Apes generally resemble men, and parrots can talk, but neither can draw boundaries between things. The *Liji* ("Quli" 曲禮, 1.6b–7a) amplifies this point:

The parrot can talk, but it is not distinct from other flying birds; the orangutan can speak, but it too is not apart from other animals. Now when men today

are lacking ritual principles, though they too can speak, do they not also have merely the mind of an animal? Only wild animals lack ritual principles. Hence parents and offspring indiscriminately share females of the species. For this reason, the sages created ritual principles to instruct man and cause him to know that it is only through rites that they are different from the beasts.

Men to be men must draw boundaries, separate social classes, and follow ritual principles. In Xunzi's mind, this meant to adopt the usages of the Zhou dynasty because it was the most-recent and best-known exemplar and the heir to a great tradition.

## TEXT

### *5.1*

In antiquity, physiognomy[17] did not exist, and the learned did not discuss it. In the past there was Gubu Ziqing,[18] and in the present generation there is Tang Ju of Liang,[19] who physiognomized the form and features of other men in order to learn whether their fortune would be good or bad, auspicious or inauspicious. Because they could do this, the unlearned men of our age praise them. But in antiquity, such men did not exist, and the learned did not discuss them.

Hence, to physiognomize the external form is not as important as evaluating[20] the mind, and evaluating the mind is not as important as selecting the proper methodology.[21] The external form cannot overcome the mind, and the mind cannot overcome the methodology. When methodology is correct and the mind is in accord with it, then though a man's external form is physiognomized as evil, since his mind and methods are good, nothing will hinder his becoming a gentleman. So, too, although a man's external form may be physiognomized as good, if his mind and methods are evil, nothing will prevent his being a petty man. Being a gentleman is properly called "good fortune," and being a petty man is properly called "bad fortune." Thus, being tall or short, small or large, having a good or bad physiognomy, is not to be fortunate or unfortunate. In antiquity, such men did not exist, and the learned did not discuss them.

Were not Ancestor Yao tall and Ancestor Shun short, King Wen tall and the Duke of Zhou short, and Confucius tall and Zigong 子貢[22] short?

Formerly Duke Ling of Wey (r. 534–493) had a minister named Gongsun Lü 公孫呂,[23] whose body was seven feet tall, his face three feet long with his forehead[24] three inches across, with his nostrils, eyes, and ears all pushed together;[25] nonetheless, his reputation agitated the whole world.[26] In Chu, Sunshu Ao, a native of the small hamlet Qisi,[27] was bald with splotches of short hair, had a left leg that was too long, and was short enough to go under the upturning poles of a state carriage; nonetheless, he made Chu lord-protector over all the states.[28] Prince Gao, the Duke of She, was so frail, small, short, and skinny that when he walked, it looked as if he could not support even his clothes, but during the revolt of the Duke of Bo in which both Premier Prince Xi and Minister of War Prince Qi were put to death, the Duke of She entered the capital and occupied it, executed the Duke of Bo, and pacified the whole of Chu as easily as turning his hand over, so that his humanity, justice, meritorious accomplishment, and fame have won the praise of posterity.[29] Accordingly, scholars[30] should not estimate the height, measure the size,[31] or reckon the weight, but should fix their attention on the mind and on nothing else.[32] What reason could there be to consider whether he is short or tall, large or small, or the physiognomy of his external form good or bad.

Moreover, in appearance King Yan of Xu's eyes were so protruded that he could see his forehead.[33] Confucius' face looked like it was covered with an exorcist's mask,[34] the Duke of Zhou's body was like a broken stump.[35] Gaoyao's complexion was like that of a shaved melon. Hongyao's face had no visible skin. Fuyue looked like he had a fin emerging from his back.[36] Yi Yin had neither beard nor eyebrows. Yu was lame, and Tang was paralyzed.[37] Yao and Shun had irregular pupils.[38] Should we who follow them consider critically their will and intellect and compare them in terms of the character of their culture and learning? Or should we take note only of differences in size to discriminate between good and bad and so cheat and bring scorn upon ourselves?

*5.2*

In antiquity, Jie and Zhou Xin were tall, well built, attractive, and handsome, heroes of the whole world, whose musculature was so powerful and whose strength was so great that they could hold their own against a hundred men.[39] Nonetheless, both lost their lives, and their kingdoms perished. They are now regarded as the greatest of criminals. Whenever we of later generations speak about evil, we must always examine their cases.[40] Their calamitous end resulted not from their ap-

pearance but from the fact that what they had heard and seen was not the whole and from the baseness of what they discussed and deliberated, and from nothing else.

It is the custom of the anarchic masses[41] of the present day that the "smart" youth of every village are all beautifully elegant and seductively fascinating. They wear striking clothing with effeminate decorations and exhibit the physical desires and bearing of a young girl. Married women once all hoped to get such a man for their husband. Unmarried girls all hope to have one of them as their knight and would even be willing to abandon their father's house so they could elope with him and take the wife's position at his side. Nonetheless, the average lord would be ashamed to have them as ministers, the average father to have them as sons, and the average man to have them as friends. And no doubt one day they will suddenly be bound and fettered before a magistrate and taken to the large marketplace for execution. When this happens, they will cry out to Heaven, weeping and wailing, bitterly aggrieved at their present circumstances and regretting too late their past. Their calamity as well resulted not from their manner, but from the fact that their experience was not whole and what they talked about was worthless. In such cases, what should we who follow afterwards depend on![42]

*5.3*

Man has three sure signs of misfortune: to be young and yet unwilling to serve one's elders; to be of humble origins and yet be unwilling to serve the noble; and to be lacking in worth yet be unwilling to serve the worthy. Such are the three sure signs of misfortune.

Man has three patterns of behavior that certainly will reduce him to dire need.

To occupy a superior position and yet be unable to love those inferior to him or to occupy an inferior position and to be fond of condemning his superiors—this is the first way to bring certainty of dire need;

To be agreeable to a person's face,[43] yet when he turns his back, to insult him—this is the second way to bring certainty of dire need; and

To be so superficial and shallow in knowledge and behavior that one makes no distinction between crookedness and uprightness[44] and thus is unable to encourage humane men and to bring glory to wise scholars[45]—this is the third way to bring certainty of dire need.

If the man who practices these modes[46] of behavior occupies a high position, he is certain to be imperiled. If he occupies a low position, he is certain to be destroyed. An Ode says:[47]

The snow falls so thickly, so thickly,
but when it is cloudless and hot, it melts.[48]
None of them is willing to fall down,
but their mode of living is empty and arrogant.[49]

This expresses my meaning.

*5.4*

What is it that makes a man human? I say that it lies in his ability to draw boundaries. To desire food when hungry, to desire warmth when cold, to desire rest when tired, and to be fond of what is beneficial and to hate what is harmful—these characteristics man is born possessing, and he does not have to wait to develop them.[50] They are identical in the case of a Yu and in that of a Jie. But even so, what makes a man really human lies not primarily in his being a featherless biped,[51] but rather in his ability to draw boundaries. For example, the Shengsheng 猩猩 ape[52] resembles a man in form[53] and is also a featherless biped,[54] but the gentleman will nonetheless sip a broth and eat minced meat made from him.[55] Hence, what makes a man human lies not in his being a featherless biped but in his ability to draw boundaries.[56] Even though wild animals have parents and offspring, there is no natural affection between them as between father and son, and though there are male and female of the species, there is no proper separation of sexes. Hence, the proper way of Man lies in nothing other than his ability to draw boundaries.

Of such boundaries, none is more important than that between social classes. Of the instruments for distinguishing social classes, none is more important than ritual principles.[57] Of the sources of ritual principles, none is more important than the sage kings. But one asks: There are a hundred sage kings, which one ought I to use as my model?[58] There is an old saying:

Inscriptions with the passing of time perish,
Rhythms that are too prolonged break apart.[59]

Officers entrusted with preserving the model and methods in the end become lax in keeping them.[60] Hence I say: If you want to observe the footprints of the sage kings, you must look where they are most clearly preserved—that is, with the Later Kings.[61] These Later Kings were lords over the whole world. To put them aside and to discuss instead extreme antiquity is like giving up your own lord and serving another. Hence I say: If you want to observe a millennium, you must look at today.[62] If you would know ten thousand or a million, you must scrutinize one or two. If you would know the ages of antiquity, you must closely examine the way of Zhou. If you would know the way of Zhou, you must care-

fully observe the ideal of the gentleman prized by its men.[63] There is an ancient saying:

> Use the near to know the remote,
> Use the one to know the myriad,
> Use the insignificant to know the glorious.

This expresses my meaning.

5.5

> Fools say:
>
> The circumstances of the past and the present are quite different, and the Way by which to bring order to the anarchy of today must be different.[64]

The mass of humanity are beguiled by this argument. The petty masses are so stupid that they lack any counterargument and so uncultivated that they have no counterstandard for measure. If they can be deceived about what they have seen with their own eye, how much more easily can they be deceived about what has been handed down over a thousand generations. Fools mislead and deceive them about what transpires within their own courtyards, how much more easily can they be misled about events that occurred a thousand years in the past.

But why can the sage not be deceived as well?[65] I say that it is because the sage uses himself as the standard for measurement. Hence, the sage uses men to measure men, circumstances to gauge circumstances,[66] each class of thing to measure that class, the persuasion to measure the achievement, and the Way to observe the totality, so that for him the ancient and modern are one and the same.[67] Things of the same class do not become contradictory even though a long time has elapsed because they share an identical principle of order. Hence, because the sage uses himself as a standard of measurement, when he encounters what is perverse and deviant, he is not led astray, and when he observes the diversity of objects of the external world, he is not confused.

That before the Five Di Ancestors there are no traditions concerning individuals is not because of the absence of sages during that time, but because of the extreme antiquity of the period. That for the period of the Five Di Ancestors there are no traditions concerning affairs of government is not because of the lack of good government, but again because of the extreme antiquity of the period. For Yu and Tang there are traditions concerning their government, but they cannot be ascertained with the detail of those for the Zhou dynasty. This again is not because of any absence of good government but because of the great antiquity of the period. What has been transmitted over a long span of time can be dis-

cussed only in broad outlines; what is recent can be discussed in greater detail. When only the broad outlines exist, major events are recorded; when the details survive, minor events are mentioned. The stupid, hearing of their broad outlines, do not know the details and, hearing of minute details, do not know the major events. This is because

> Inscriptions with the passing of time perish,
> Rhythms that are too prolonged break apart.

*5.6*

Every doctrine that is neither consistent with Ancient Kings[68] nor in accord with the requirements of ritual and moral principles is properly described as a "treacherous doctrine." Although they may be the product of a discrimination, the gentleman will not heed it. Though one models himself after the example of the Ancient Kings, is in accord in his actions with the requirements of ritual and moral principles, and is a partisan[69] of learning, but nonetheless is not fond of advocating the truth and does not take enjoyment in it, he certainly is no true scholar. Hence the gentleman's relation to advocating the truth is such that his innermost mind loves it, his actions find peace in it, and his joy is in approving it.[70] Thus,

> the gentleman must engage in discriminations. Every man without exception is fond of discussing what he finds to be good, but this is especially so with the gentleman.[71]

Accordingly, to make the gift of true doctrines to another is more valuable than gold, gems, pearls, and jade.[72] To show them to another is more beautiful than the embroidered emblems on the ceremonial court robes of the king.[73] To cause him to hear them is more enjoyable than the music of bells and drums and of zithers and lutes. For this reason, the gentleman never grows weary of advocating his doctrines. The uncultivated rustic is opposed to such things because he loves only the bare actuality and cares nothing for refinements of form; thus, his whole life is inescapably low, base, common, and vulgar.[74] Hence the *Changes* say:

> A tied sack: nothing to blame, nothing to praise.[75]

This describes the corrupt Ru.

*5.7*

All the difficulties of persuasions lie in this: that the highest must be juxtaposed with the lowest, that the most orderly must be connected with the most chaotic, and that this may never be done by the most direct route. If one adduces distant examples, they are annoyed at the ex-

aggerations; if one cites[76] recent examples, they are annoyed at their commonplaceness. A true expert in this pursuit is sure to avoid both difficulties by adducing only distant examples that are not exaggerated and by citing recent examples that are not commonplace. He modifies and changes them with the occasion, adapting and adjusting them to the age, sometimes indulgent, sometimes urgent, sometimes expansive, other times restrictive. Channel them like canal ditches, force them like the press-frame,[77] accommodating them to the circumstances so that your audience will get hold of the idea under discussion, yet will not be given offense or be insulted.

Hence, the gentleman measures himself with the exactness of the plumbline, but when he comes into contact with others, he uses the less demanding bow-frame.[78] Because he measures himself with the plumbline, he deserves to be considered the model and paradigm of the whole world. Because when he comes into contact with others he uses the bow-frame, he is capable of magnanimity and tolerance. In consequence he can help to bring[79] the great undertakings of the world to fruition. Hence, the gentleman, though worthy, is able to tolerate the unfit. Though wise, he is able to suffer the stupid. Though profound, he is able to endure the superficial. Though pure, he can tolerate the adulterated. This may be described as the "universal method." An Ode says:[80]

> That the region of Xu was joined to the realm[81]
> was the accomplishment of the Son of Heaven.

This expresses my meaning.

### *5.8*[82]
### *The Proper Methodology for Debate and Persuasion*

Introduce the topic with dignity and earnestness, dwell on it with modesty and sincerity, hold to it with firmness and strength, illustrate its meaning with parables and praiseworthy examples,[83] elucidate its significance by making distinctions and drawing boundaries,[84] and present it with exuberance and ardor.[85] If you make it something precious and rare, valuable and magical, your persuasion will always and invariably be well received, and even if you do not please them, none will fail to esteem you. This may indeed be described as "being able to bring esteem to what one prizes." A tradition says:

> It is only the gentleman who is capable of bringing esteem to what he prizes.

This expresses my meaning.[86]

*5.9*

> The gentleman must engage in discriminations. Every man without exception is fond of discussing what he finds to be good, but this is especially so with the gentleman.[87]

For this reason, whereas the petty man engages in discriminations to discuss threats of danger, the gentleman engages in them to discuss the principle of humanity. If a line of discussion does not coincide with the requirements of the principle of humanity, its words are worse than remaining silent and the discrimination not as good as stuttering. If the tenor of one's words coincides with the principle of humanity, the person who enjoys advocating true doctrines is superior to the man who does not. Hence, advocating the principle of humanity is of primary importance. Arising among the ruling classes, advocacy is used to guide the lower classes. Government regulations and ordinances are examples.[88] Arising from the lower classes, it is expressed in a loyalty to the ruling classes. Remonstrances and reproofs are examples.[89] Accordingly,

> the gentleman never grows weary of the principle of humanity, for he loves it in his innermost mind, his actions find peace in it, and his joy is in discussing it.[90]

Thus it is said:

> The gentleman must engage in discriminations.

Discrimination of secondary matters is not as important as making visible the first manifestations. Making visible the first manifestations is not as important as tracing social distinctions to their origins.[91] Through discrimination of secondary matters, one gains precision; through making visible the first manifestations, one gains understanding; and through tracing social distinctions to their origins, one discovers their principle of order. The division between the sage and the scholar and gentleman is provided for.

*5.10*

There are the discriminations of the petty man, those of the gentleman, and those of the sage. The discriminations of the sage involve no prior consideration and no planning beforehand, yet whatever he expresses is appropriate, perfected in form, and exactly proper to its type. In raising up issues or in setting them aside, in removing them or shifting them, he responds inexhaustibly to every change. The discriminations of the scholar and gentleman consider problems in advance and plan for them early, so that when they speak even on the spur of the moment,

their advice deserves a hearing. They are well composed yet convey realities and are wide in learning yet committed to what is upright.[92]

If one listens to their discussion, though they appear to offer propositions and discriminations, they lack any guiding principle that connects everything together. If you employ them, they are so given to deception that they are devoid of accomplishment. On the one hand, they are incapable of gaining the acquiescence of an enlightened king and, on the other hand, inadequate to get agreement and common accord from the Hundred Clans. Further, through a clever and glib tongue,[93] whether with garrulity or with but a simple yes, they give the appearance of being in full accord,[94] but they ought to be regarded like braggarts, arrogant attendants,[95] and others of their ilk. Such persons may be described as the most dominant of villainous men. Should a sage king arise, his first task would be to execute them and only then deal with thieves and robbers. Because although one can succeed in getting robbers and thieves to transform themselves, one cannot get these men to change.

# BOOK 6

# *Contra Twelve Philosophers*

## INTRODUCTION

Xunzi's "Contra Twelve Philosophers" criticizes those philosophers whose doctrines and influence he regarded as dangerous to society. In doing so, he provides a rare survey of currents of contemporary thought. Together with the "World of Thought" of the *Zhuangzi* and the "Eminence in Learning" in the *Hanfeizi*, this book offers important insight into the intellectual life of late Warring States China. One might understand the title to be harsher than "contra," if one takes this book to be in the Mohist polemical tradition. As such it would be a successor to Mo Di's "Condemnation of the Ru" and should be considered Xunzi's "Condemnation of Twelve Philosophers."[1]

None of Xunzi's books has done more damage to his reputation. In other books, we have seen his censure of "worthless" and "base" Ru philosophers, but in none was criticism so directly aimed at particular heroes of the conventional, officially sanctioned Confucianism of the imperial period. Yang Liang, who shared the pieties of Tang Confucianism, felt embarrassed that Xunzi had attacked Mencius, whose canonization had then just begun, and Zisi, who was, after all, a grandson of Confucius. He and many others after him offered the lame suggestion that the offending passage had been inserted into the text by some opponent of Ru doctrines, possibly either Han Fei or Li Si, to use Xunzi to discredit the Ru. But this suggestion is absurd (see Appendix B). Other disciples of Xunzi, who may well have had a hand in the compilation of his works, were more conventional than their master insofar as we may judge from the sparse indications.

Xunzi attacks the twelve philosophers and the six philosophical positions their theories represent because they confuse the world with false notions of right and wrong and of what produces order and what anarchy. The Chinese terms for "right" and "wrong" (*shi*/*fei* 是/非) embrace not only the moral distinction but also the epistemological distinction between "what is the case" and "what is not the case." Here Xunzi

undoubtedly means the epistemological as well as the moral distinction since he advocates in his "On the Correct Use of Names" the rectification of names. Like Nietzsche, Xunzi had no use for false but beautiful notions that lead to error and anarchy.

*Wei Mou and Tuo Xiao.* The innate nature of man embraces a love of profit and the natural desire for sex, food, clothing, and other bodily comforts, as well as the emotions. The inevitable result of following one's innate nature, as Tuo Xiao 它囂 and Wei Mou 魏牟 propose, can lead only to the conflict, disorder, and anarchy that the Ancient Kings abhorred. Xunzi thus considered that since man's nature was evil, the views of these two must necessarily lead to social chaos. Nothing whatever is known of Tuo Xiao except what is said here. Even his name does not occur elsewhere in the literature. This surprising fact, and the substitution of Fan Sui for his name in the *Hanshi waizhuan* parallel, has caused some scholars to surmise that the reading is an error for some other name, these characters having been mistaken for others similar in appearance. Guo Moruo suggests that he is Huan Yuan, a member of the Jixia Academy whose works are now lost. Unfortunately, we know very little of Huan Yuan other than that the *Hanshu* "Bibliographic Treatise" classifies him as a Daoist. We are thus unable to say that Huan's views match those described in this book.[2] Wei Mou, as we have seen, was influential in the court of the Lord of Pingyuan, where Xunzi undoubtedly first encountered his views.

*Chen Zhong and Shi Qiu.* The position opposite to that of Tuo Xiao and Wei Mou, that of repressing the desires by denying them, is equally in error. Such a way is cultivated only by those who pretend to superiority by having transcended the desires that all men manifestly have. Such men as Chen Zhong, called by his alternate name Tian Zhong in "Nothing Indecorous," and Shi Qiu want to do injury to the natural distinctions of wealth and honor on which society is founded.

*Mo Di and Song Xing.* To ignore gradations of rank and to abolish the social distance proper between ruler and subject out of concern for principles of mere utility or frugality undermine society in Xunzi's view. In advocating these principles, Song Xing seems to Xunzi the successor of Mo Di.

*Shen Dao and Tian Pian.* Elevating the principle of law without providing for the classical norm and masking a fondness for innovation behind the appearance of "following along" with the customs of the past destroy the state and undermine social distinctions. Shen Dao was concerned with the need for law, to be understood as the abstract principles

of positive law rather than the enactment of specific rules with punishments, and thought it the proper basis of society. But Xunzi faulted his views because they failed to recognize the fundamental importance of the customary usages contained in ritual principles. It was not enough to have a "public" law that superseded private interests; the rationale for society and its institutions had to be based on common consent expressed through the voluntary submission of the people to the prince. The sage consolidated the submission of the people through ritual and observance of practices sanctioned by tradition. Like all thinkers of the Ru persuasion, Xunzi disliked innovation or change for its own sake. We have seen that Confucius had remarked that he was a "transmitter and not a creator" (*LY*, 7.1) and the *Mozi* confirms that the Ru claimed that a "gentleman is a follower and not a creator" (39 "Fei Ru," 9.21a). Shen Dao, like most philosophers, observed the practice of citing ancient authority to support his theories because in the milieu of the day to characterize one's thoughts as "innovative" or "modern" was to condemn them utterly. To Xunzi this was a ruse because there was no recurrent theme or main topic to which Shen Dao and Tian Pian returned as he himself returned to the principles of humanity and justice or to ritual principles and the ideal of the gentleman.

*Hui Shi and Deng Xi.* Shocking propositions, useless conclusions, and meager results are all that those who pursue abstruse matters of logic have to offer. Xunzi accepted and used improvements in exactness of formulation, in precision of definition, and in elegance of argument that Deng Xi and Hui Shi made through their analysis of discriminations, but he thought that their doctrines and conclusions lacked any guiding rules and ordering norms for the government and were thus worthless to kings and commoners alike.

*Zisi and Mencius.* Zisi was Kong Ji 孔伋, the grandson of Confucius (*SJ*, 74.3), and, through his disciples, the teacher of Mencius (*Mengzi*, 2B.2, 5B.6–7, 6B.6). He is known to have been active during the reign of Duke Mu of Lu 魯穆公 (r. 415–383) and is traditionally credited with the *Zhongyong*, "Doctrine of the Mean."[3] Though the present text by that name may include sections by Zisi, it clearly was not compiled or at least finally edited until the beginning of the Qin dynasty. We are thus uncertain of the specific ideas of Zisi. Mencius' works, in contrast, are the best preserved of any philosopher of the period. The evidence of Mencius' works dates him to the last two decades of the fourth century, and his conception of man's inborn nature is refuted by Xunzi in "Man's Nature Is Evil."

Xunzi contends that other philosophers did follow the model of the Ancient Kings, but in a fragmentary way. But since knowledge of the

model had decayed with the passage of time, Xunzi advocated following the model of the Later Kings, particularly the founding kings of the Zhou dynasty, which was still well known. Philosophers of Xunzi's own time who adhered to the model of the Ancient Kings had begun to contaminate the true doctrines of Confucius with the Five Processes 五行 theory by passing them off as transmitted by Zisi and Mencius. They debased the true heritage of the sage to give a cloak of respectability to pernicious doctrines.

This contention of Xunzi's has caused much of the opprobrium from which Xunzi has suffered since the canonization of Mencius in the Song period. It has also puzzled scholars since nothing in the surviving works and fragments of Mencius and, insofar as can be known, those of Zisi indicates even the slightest connection with the Five Processes theory.[4] Yang Liang, knowing that Mencius did not discuss the Five Processes, identified the term with the Five Constants of correct behavior: humanity, ritual, morality, wisdom, and honesty. Though these words are often used by Confucius and Mencius, there is no reason to think that Xunzi would criticize Mencius for them since he endorses them all himself.[5] The problem must therefore lie elsewhere.

The central point at issue is the meaning of two sentences: Does Xunzi say that Zisi and Mencius transmitted these doctrines; and does he blame them for the corruption of traditional Ru values? Most scholars have answered yes to both questions and have been faced with the problem of accounting for Xunzi's statement, which so patently contradicts historical fact, at least insofar as the evidence indicates. Arthur Waley first offered another view: this paragraph is "not (as has been supposed) an attack on [Zisi and] Mencius but on the 'Cosmologists,'" who advocated the Five Processes theory.[6] This interpretation causes the dilemma simply to disappear by squaring the passage with the facts. What Xunzi is here criticizing is not the original doctrines of Zisi and Mencius, though elsewhere he criticizes some of these, but their corruption through admixture with the Five Processes theory.

*The Adaptation of Wu Xing Theory.* The Five Processes theory was of major importance in Xunzi's day and assumed even greater significance in the Han dynasty, when it penetrated the official Confucianism of the Imperial University. The origins of the theory perhaps date to the fifth century, and possibly earlier, depending on how one dates the composition of the "Hongfan" 洪范, one of the *Documents*,[7] which possibly testifies to an early incorporation of primitive Five Processes ideas into the traditions of the Ru philosophers. But its systematization into a comprehensive philosophy appears to have occurred only after 300 in the works of Zou Yan. By 250 its ideas were known to all schools of Chinese phi-

losophy, as witnessed by references to the theory in such varied works as the *Guanzi*, *Mozi*, *Lüshi chunqiu*, *Zhuangzi*, and *Xunzi*. The amalgamation of Ru concepts with Five Processes ideas is associated with the transmission of the *Documents*. Proscribed during the Qin dynasty, the *Documents* were transmitted to the Han period solely through Fu Sheng (250–175). The commentary he prepared for the *Documents*, his *Shangshu dazhuan*, testifies to the fusion of the ideas of the Ru with those of the Five Processes theory that Xunzi condemns. Though now surviving only in fragments, Fu Sheng's line of argument is preserved in the "Treatise on the Five Processes" in Ban Gu's *Hanshu* (written about A.D. 90).

Xunzi may have had cause to be alarmed that even his own students, among them probably Zhang Cang, had been seduced by such notions. Zhang was clearly interested in the Five Processes theory. When he "rectified" the calendar and pitchpipes for the newly established Han dynasty, he took as the starting point the fact that it was in the tenth month that Gaozu, who founded the dynasty, reached Baoshang. Thus, he advocated continuing the old Qin practice of using the tenth month as the beginning of the new year. Drawing inferences from the cycle of mutations of the Five Powers, he concluded that the Power by which Han ruled should be water and that black should be its heraldic color, as it had been for Qin before it (*SJ*, 96.10). Sima Qian reports that Zhang loved every kind of book, examined everything that came his way, and understood them all. He excelled in everything connected with calendrics and pitchpipes (*SJ*, 96.11). Liu Xin includes a book by Zhang among the treatises concerned with the Yin-Yang school (*HSBZ*, 30.39b).

By 150, the Five Processes theory was an integral part of the mainstream of Confucian thinking, as witnessed by the *Chunqiu fanlu* 春秋繁露 of Dong Zhongshu. With the establishment of the Imperial University and the naming of Erudites for the Five Classics (in 136), the synthesis became the dominant philosophy.[8] Xunzi's condemnation should thus be taken as the earliest protest against a tendency that would later become triumphant by giving a "cloak of respectability," as he put it, to such ideas by attributing them to Confucius and claiming that they had been transmitted by Zisi and Mencius.

*Five Processes Theory*. The term *wu xing* 五行 has commonly been translated "Five Elements" since its five terms were fire, water, earth, wood, and metal, which, in a general way, resembled Greek notions usually translated "elements." But *xing* 行 never meant a constituent of matter. Translating it "element" inevitably leads to this misunderstanding. In common language, the character *xing* means "walk, move" and, by extension, when understood in a causal sense, "put into effect." It also means "row or column" as the "column of troops" of a moving army. It

is out of these ordinary meanings of the character that the technical term *wu xing* developed. The *xing* were not the "agent," "force," or "mechanism" of change, but they could be the *phases* of change as when $H_2O$ changes from ice to water to steam, or the *stages* of change associated with transformations of the hexagrams in the *Changes*, or the *activities* appropriate to the various seasons, or the *processes* of change symbolized by each of the *xing*. Each meaning is appropriate in certain contexts, but none is adequate to all. I have adopted the translation "processes" because it best illustrates the kinds of meaning that Xunzi seems to have had in mind in criticizing the theory.[9]

The description of each of the five "processes" is found in the "Hongfan" (5; Karlgren, "Book of Documents," p. 29), where the *wu xing* are among the invariable principles of Nature:[10] "The first of them are called the Five Processes. They are called: first, water; second, fire; third, wood; fourth, metal; and fifth, earth. 'Water' designates what soaks and descends. 'Fire' designates what blazes and ascends. 'Wood' designates what can be made curved or straight. 'Metal' designates what can follow its nature or be made to change.[11] 'Earth' designates what permits sowing and reaping." Here we are confronted with a passage using common words in a technical sense. Consequently we are undertranslating or loosely and ambiguously translating a passage that once had a precise sense now lost or unclear. This is suggested by the statements that follow in the "Hongfan."

It is said that "soaking" and "descending" produce saltiness, which seems to imply the chemical process of dissolving and precipitation that produces salts. What the text means by "blazing" and "ascending" producing "bitterness" is difficult to construe, though, as Needham (2:244) notes, it "may imply the use of heat in preparing decoctions of medicinal plants, which would be the bitterest substances likely to be known." "Wood" can be "made straight or curved," as Xunzi noted in his "Exhortation to Learning" (1.1). This suggests "workability" since it has no unalterable shape; with decomposition it becomes "sour." The meaning of "metal" being able to "follow its nature or made to change" apparently involves the "moldability" of metals, which, when heated, are reduced to liquids. The steaming of wood and the sharpening of metal were recurrent metaphors for the permanent improvements that education effected on inborn nature ("Xing'e," 23.1b). But in the Five Processes theory, smelting is associated with "acridity" as "wood" is with "sour." "Earth," which stands for the fundamental activity of society, sowing and reaping, is associated with "sweet," which is common throughout the world, as in "sweet" water, "sweet" soil, "sweet" milk, meaning "good, productive."

Interesting though the five processes are in suggesting the emergence

of Chinese ideas about science and scientific theory, it was the social and political implications that interested the kings of the Warring States period. The "theory" they desired to understand contended that there was a periodical dominance of each of the five "processes" in turn during the cycles of history. Each dynasty had been characterized by dominance of one of the "processes." Each was in turn succeeded by a different dynasty characterized by dominance of a different process.[12] Two basic questions, in the view of the day, needed to be answered: How do the processes succeed one another; and what is the state or phase of the present age and what is its dominant process?

To the first question, several answers were current in Xunzi's day: the processes evolve from one into the other;[13] they produce one another;[14] they conquer one another.[15] This last is the theory for which Zou Yan was famous. It is usually thought that this is the version that Xunzi condemns in this book. The Mohists as well condemned this version, arguing that "the Five Processes do not constantly conquer. That fire melts metal is because there is much fire; that the metal uses the charcoal fuel is because there is much metal."[16]

To the second question there were also several answers, but it was the theory systematized by Zou Yan that dominated the age. It had direct and immediate political consequences since it taught that each epoch of history was ruled by a particular process that determined its character. Each ruling house had come to power through the natural succession of these processes, which in turn made its decline inevitable. Since it was obvious that the Zhou dynasty was in decline, the burning issue of political speculation was who would succeed. Knowing the process that would rule the next epoch and understanding how to use it would give a man such immense powers that he could gain the empire. Zou Yan said:

> When any Di ancestor or king is about to arise, Heaven is certain first to exhibit auspicious omens to the people. In the time of Huang Di, Heaven first had large earthworms and large ants appear. He said: "The Earth essence (*qi* 氣) is conquering. For this reason our heraldry should honor yellow and our affairs should be modeled after Earth." . . . In the time of King Wen, Heaven first exhibited Fire. Red birds holding documents written in cinnabar script flocked to the altars of Zhou. He said: "The Fire essence is conquering. For this reason, our heraldry should honor red, and our affairs should be modeled after Fire."
>
> Following Fire, Water is sure to come. Heaven will first exhibit signs when the Water essence is about to conquer. Then the heraldry should honor black, and affairs should be modeled after Water. And that dispensation in turn will come to an end at its appointed time, though we know not when, and all will return once more to Earth. (*LSCQ*, 13/2 "Yingtong" 應同, 13.4a)

Associated with the *wu xing* Five Processes were the *wu de* "Five Powers," that is, the "power" (*de* 德) intrinsic to, and inherent in, each of the pro-

cesses. Each of the Five Powers was followed, according to Zou Yan (as quoted in *Wenxuan* 59.9b), by the power it could not conquer.

Who would succeed and when they would succeed, all were anxious to learn. Zou Yan taught that it would be by the process Water and that there would be omens indicating its impending conquest. But how these could be anticipated and identified was uncertain and required "expert" judgments. Nonetheless, despite arguments over details, most apparently believed the theory was true. So when Qin conquered the empire and the First Emperor was proclaimed, "black" became the heraldic color, and the affairs of government were modeled after water. With the founding of the Han dynasty, it was thought that the power Water still prevailed, and so the color black was adopted,[17] in part, as we have seen, because of the influence of Xunzi's disciple Zhang Cang,[18] which may explain further the strength of Xunzi's denunciation of the admixture of *wu xing* ideas with Ru traditions.

*The Condemnation of Aberrant Ru Schools.* In this book, Xunzi singles out three specific groups of Ru for condemnation: those who claimed the disciples Zizhang, Zixia, and Ziyou as the founders of their school. We have seen that these disciples and their students are responsible for the *Analects* of Confucius and that Mencius apparently regarded them as a party or group. Writing about the same time as this book, Han Fei (50 "Xianxue," 19.9a) mentions only Zizhang among the founders of separate branches or schools of Ru. Xunzi, however, distinguishes between them, though all are condemned as "base Ru."

Zizhang is the style name of Zhuansun Shi 顓孫師, a native of Chen, who is said to have been 49 years younger than Confucius (*SJ*, 67.30–32). In the *Analects*, he frequently asks Confucius questions about humaneness and other topics[19] and is credited with several sayings of his own (*LY*, 19.1–3). He is described by the master as "going too far" and being "self-important," characteristics perhaps exaggerated in the behavior of his disciples in Xunzi's day (*LY*, 11.16, 19.16). Zizhang is ridiculed by a fictional eccentric called Mr. "Full of Ill-gotten Gains" in the *Zhuangzi* (29 "Dao Zhi," 9.22a). In the *Analects* (2.18), it is admitted that he studied in order to get an official emolument.

Zixia is the style name of Bu Shang 卜商, whose origins are unclear, though he is said to have been 44 years younger than Confucius (*SJ*, 67.28–30). He is especially important in the spread of Ru doctrines because late in life he became the adviser to Marquis Wen of Wei, who, alone among the feudal lords of that time, was fond of learning (*SJ*, 121.4). He is known to have been especially interested in ritual and is credited with the transmission of the *Odes*, which he had received from Confucius. He discusses rituals with Confucius and asks about the true

meaning of the *Odes* (*LY*, 12.5, 3.8). He offers interpretations of the Master's words, has numerous sayings of his own (*LY*, 1.7, 19.4–13), and is specifically credited with "disciples and scholars" (19.3 19.12). Mo Di had a conversation with one of his disciples (46 "Geng Zhu" 耕柱, 11.19a). It is apparent that he was very important in the formation of the *Analects* tradition and that he founded a school, though not one of the eight mentioned by Han Fei (50 "Xianxue," 19.9a). Zixia is described as "not going far enough," in contrast to Zizhang (*LY*, 11.16), and praised together with Ziyou for his culture and learning (*LY*, 11.3). Confucius once admonished him to be a gentleman Ru and not a common, petty Ru (*LY*, 6.13), which may have been the basis of Xunzi's criticism of his followers, who exaggerated his faults and shortcomings.

Ziyou, whose name was Yan Yan 言偃, is not well known (*SJ*, 121.4), but he held office as commandant of Wu during the lifetime of Confucius (*LY*, 6.14, 17.4), is credited with several sayings in the *Analects* (4.26, 19.14–15), and identified the Way with music performances and the rites, which perhaps led his disciples to excess (*LY*, 17.4). He severely criticized the disciples of Zixia, saying that they were fit only for "sprinkling and sweeping floors" and other "minor matters" (*LY*, 19.12).

Other than what Xunzi says in this paragraph, we have no direct knowledge of the distinctive features of each of these schools. The syncretism of the Han period indiscriminately combined materials from diverse schools. In the process, differences between the followers of the various disciples have largely been obliterated. Today, it is all but impossible to identify with a particular individual or school such differences as are still apparent in the individual books of large compendiums of various ritual texts such as the *Liji* and *Da Dai liji*.

*The True Ru Heritage.* Alone among the disciples who founded schools, Xunzi thought Zigong transmitted the true doctrines of the Master.[20] Even such great men in better ages than the present, Xunzi concluded, did not always wield power. But if they do, as did Shun and Yu, the whole world benefits. When they do not, as Confucius and Zigong did not, they leave behind a perfected sense of what is morally right. This later generations must honor because it is what all who aspire to be a humane man in an evil age, such as that in which Xunzi lived, should do. Following these precepts, such a man will be able to silence the theories of the twelve philosophers, and he can make manifest the heritage of the sages. But if he fails to do this, then dissolute undertakings, outlooks, and theories will develop. However difficult such theories are to grasp or master, they can lead to nothing.

*Philosophy and Language.* In this book, we encounter an excellent example of the kind of sentence that accounts for the notion that Chinese

"is vague and general" and that its utterances are accordingly always "ambiguous." The laconic character of Chinese propositions is indeed illustrated by Xunzi's remark *xin xin xin ye* 信信信也, "trust trust trust indeed." The absence of inflection of the word stem makes the three occurrences of the word apparently the same, the meaning being determined by syntax alone. Because Chinese has few traces of inflection, abstract ideas sometimes seem strange and peculiar, masked as they are behind common, ordinary forms. Specialized and technical usages—forms distinguished in English by inflection or by borrowing from a learned language like Greek or Latin—are often overlooked in ancient Chinese because they have been forgotten over the centuries that separate Xunzi's language from contemporary Chinese, where only the common meaning or an altered meaning remains known. Recent research has uncovered many such terms, particularly important technical terms applied to technical and scientific pursuits or the specialized language of mathematics, logic, and philosophy.

The meaning of the sentence is quite clear: "trusting what is trustworthy constitutes true trust." But, as Yang Liang notes, this is to be understood with its complement "doubting what should be doubted" (or "doubting what is dubious") also "constitutes true trust." This complementarity illustrates the Chinese tendency, especially evident in the concept of Yin and Yang, to analyze reality into contrasting, opposite terms, the union of which constitutes reality. Thus, the concept of "trust" understood fully must encompass not only "trusting the trustworthy" but also "doubting the dubious." Confucius made the same point with regard to knowledge: "When you know something, to recognize that you know it, and when you do not know something, to recognize that you do not know it—this is knowledge" (*LY*, 2.17).[21] Xunzi applies this way of thinking not only to "trust" but also to humaneness.

*The Gentleman.* The whole world willingly submits to a man who has the heart of a sage because it senses that his inner power, his intelligence, his wisdom, and his high position will benefit everyone and that he would not harm them, or trick them, or behave arrogantly toward them. The gentleman asks when he does not know, studies what he has not mastered, and yields to superior talent even where he has ability. Whatever his strength, courage, or resolution, the gentleman will never cause injury to others. Thus, he loves all, respects all, and will contend with none. He is complete like Heaven and Earth, so that all but the recalcitrant submit to him.

Students of Xunzi's day wanted to gain high office and the wealth that went with it, as did Li Si. They thus intended to be "scholar-officials." But Xunzi believed that the ancient ideal had been corrupted

into mere greed and avarice by those who used high office as the occasion for arrogant and insulting displays. Similarly, the noble ideal of "scholar-recluse" had been debased by ignorant fools who pretended to esoteric knowledge, by desire-ridden creatures who feigned desirelessness, and by false and impure hypocrites who spoke loftily of integrity and prudence. In antiquity, Xunzi believed, scholar-recluses were worthy men who lived away from court in remote rural places. Most would not hold office because they thought it would compromise their principles to do so. Stories of venerable recluses were current even in Confucius' time.[22] Such men were thought to pursue Inner Quiet (*jing* 靜), which was induced by stilling the mind and blocking out sensory distractions, until a state of empty, blank, pure consciousness was reached.

> When the mind is quiet and the life-breath regular,
> the Way can be made to stay.
>
> .....
>
> When the mind is cultivated and the intellect made quiet,
> the Way can be obtained.
>
> (*Guanzi*, 49 "Neiye," 16.2a)[23]

But by Xunzi's time, one could find only frauds who pretended to be "scholar-recluses" to justify their eccentric and unrestrained conduct.

Xunzi concludes this book with the admonition that the gentleman should not be ashamed that he does not hold office and is unable to cause others to believe that he is honorable and trustworthy because shame comes not from what others think of him but from what he really is. The gentleman is distinguished by never being remiss in the performance of his duty and in being responsive to every transformation. In this he is utterly unlike the base Ru who follow the disciples Zizhang, Zixia, and Ziyou.

## TEXT

### *6.1*

Some men of the present generation[24] cloak pernicious persuasions in beautiful language and present elegantly composed but treacherous doctrines[25] and so create disorder and anarchy in the world. Such men are personally insidious and ostentatious, conceited and vulgar,[26] yet they

spread through the whole world their confused ignorance of wherein lies the distinction between right and wrong and between order and anarchy.

*6.2*

Some men indulge their inborn nature and emotions,[27] are content with unrestrained passion and an overbearing manner,[28] and behave like animals. They are unfit for employment to put usages in conformity with good form[29] or bring success to government. Nonetheless, some of what they advocate has a rational basis, and their statements have perfect logic, enough indeed to deceive and mislead the ignorant masses.[30] Such men are Tuo Xiao[31] and Wei Mou.

*6.3*

Some men repress their emotions and innate nature. Theirs is an excessively narrow path and a harsh and intricate way,[32] and they foolishly consider that the differences that separate them from other men constitute their superiority over others. But they are adequate neither to the task of bringing concord to the great mass of the people nor to that of clarifying the fundamental distinctions in society. Nonetheless, some of what they advocate has a rational basis, and their statements have perfect logic, enough indeed to deceive and mislead the ignorant masses. Such men are Chen Zhong and Shi Qiu.[33]

*6.4*

Some men do not know how to unify the world or how to establish the "evaluations and designations" for the nation,[34] but, rather, elevate the principles of merit and utility, place great stress on frugality and economy, and ignore[35] gradations of rank and status. They are unwilling to admit that there are differences that must be explained and that there must be social distance between the lord and his subjects. Nonetheless, some of what they advocate has a rational basis, and their statements have perfect logic, enough indeed to deceive and mislead the ignorant masses. Such men are Mo Di and Song Xing.

*6.5*

Some men honor the principle of law but are themselves without law. They deprecate the principle of "following along with the usages of the past" and are fond of innovation.[36] They obtain a hearing from the ruling class and a following among the unsophisticated.[37] On every occasion their doctrines are perfected in form, well composed, and fully

documented, but if one turns around[38] and closely examines what they say, it turns out to be masterfully grandiose but to lack any basic theme or main topic to which it returns. It is impossible for them to provide a classical norm for the state or to fix social distinctions. Nonetheless, some of what they advocate has a rational basis, and their statements have perfect logic, enough indeed to deceive and mislead the ignorant masses. Such men are Shen Dao and Tian Pian.

*6.6*

Some men do not model their doctrines after the Early Kings and do not affirm ritual or moral principles, but are fond of treating abstruse theories and playing with shocking propositions.[39] Although formulated with extreme exactness, their propositions concern matters of no urgency,[40] and their theories, though defended by discriminations, are quite useless.[41] Though they treat many topics, their results are meager, and they cannot be considered to have provided any guiding rules or ordering norms for government.[42] Nonetheless, some of what they advocate has a rational basis, and their statements have perfect logic, enough indeed to deceive and mislead the ignorant masses. Such men are Hui Shi and Deng Xi.

*6.7*[43]

Some men follow the model of the Ancient Kings in a fragmentary way, but they do not understand its guiding principles. Still[44] their abilities are manifold, their memory great,[45] and their experience and knowledge both varied and broad. They have initiated a theory for which they claim great antiquity, calling it the Five Processes theory. Peculiar and unreasonable in the extreme, it lacks proper logical categories.[46] Mysterious and enigmatic, it lacks a satisfactory theoretical basis. Esoteric and laconic in its statements, it lacks adequate explanations.[47] To give their propositions a cloak of respectability and to win respect and veneration for them, they claim:

> These doctrines represent the genuine words of the gentleman of former times. Zisi provided the tune for them, and Mencius harmonized it.[48]

The stupid, indecisive, deluded Ru of today enthusiastically welcome these notions, unaware that they are false.[49] They pass on what they have received, believing that, on account of these theories, Confucius and Zigong[50] would be highly esteemed by later generations. It is in just this that they offend against Zisi and Mencius.[51]

*6.8*

If a man[52] combined specific methods with general strategies, made what he said equal what he did, united guiding principles with the proper categories for each thing, and assembled the most talented heroes of the world, informing them of the greatness of antiquity[53] and teaching them perfect obedience, then by merely facing toward the south wall of his room and sitting upon his mat,[54] the full array of forms and outward signs of the sage king would gather about him, and because of him the customs of a tranquil age would develop abundantly.[55] The practitioners of the six theories could not gain entry to his court, and men like these twelve philosophers could not associate with him. Though he lacked so much as a pinpoint of land, kings and dukes could not rival his fame. Should he once occupy the position of grand officer, a single ruler could not keep him to himself, and a single state could not contain him.[56] The greatness of his reputation would exceed that of the feudal lords, each of whom would long to employ him as their minister.[57] Even such a sage does not always gain a position of power. Such were Confucius and Zigong.

If a man unifies the whole empire, controls[58] the myriad things, rears and nourishes the common people,[59] benefits the whole world universally—so that wherever his influence reaches or knowledge of him penetrates,[60] none will but follow and submit to him—and if the practitioners of the six theories instantly become silent and men like these twelve philosophers are converted, then a sage has attained power. Such were Shun and Yu.

With what task should the humane man of today occupy himself? On the one hand, he should model himself after the regulations of Shun and Yu; and on the other hand, he should model himself after the moral principles manifested by Confucius and Zigong, thereby making it his task to silence the theories of the twelve philosophers. When this has been done, then harm to the world is eliminated, the undertakings of the humane man are completed, and the footprints of the sage kings are made visible.[61]

*6.9*

Trusting the trustworthy is trust; suspecting the suspect is also trust. Esteeming the worthy is humaneness; deprecating the unworthy is humaneness as well. 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. There-

fore, 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.[62] The petty man speaks frequently but in a manner that does not adhere to the model, his thoughts drowning in the verbiage of his idle chatter[63] even when he engages in the disciplined discourse of formal discriminations.

Hence labor, though toilsome, that is not a suitable occupation for the people[64] is termed a "dissolute undertaking." Knowledge that does not fit with the standards of the Ancient Kings, though hard won, is said to be that of a "dissolute mind." Discriminations and theories, illustrations and examples, though clever and sufficient, convenient and profitable, that do not follow the requirements of ritual and moral principles are termed "dissolute theories." The sage kings forbade these three dissolute things.

Those who most threaten public order are men who are wise but engage in daring exploits, who are malefactors with diabolic cleverness, who are skillful yet given to falseness and deception,[65] who discuss the useless but with formal discriminations, and who deal with matters of no urgency yet use precise investigations.[66] The great prohibitions of antiquity were against peculiar conduct engaged in with obstinate persistence, glossing over wrongs with fondness, playing with dissoluteness out of considerations of benefit,[67] and subversion of rational order yet engaging in advocacy and using discriminations.[68] The whole world scorns those who have knowledge but lack the model, those who are brave but reckless, those who, though capable of precise discriminations, hold on to perverse principles, those who have an excess of goods but are niggardly in their use,[69] those who are fond of debauchery and entice others to it, those who despite adequate material gain still go astray, and those who "carrying a stone on their back" throw themselves away.[70]

### *6.10*
### *The Heart of One to Whom the Whole World Would Willingly Submit*[71]

Exalted, highly esteemed, and honored—he does not use these to be arrogant toward others. Astutely intelligent and possessing sage-like wisdom—he does not use these to place others in difficulty. Quick-witted, fluent, agile, and universal in his intellectual grasp—he does not employ[72] these to gain precedence over others. Strong, resolute, brave, and daring—he does not use these to cause injury to others. When he does not know, he asks others; when he lacks an ability he studies; and even when he possesses an ability, he always yields to others. Only thusly does a man develop inner power.

When such a man unexpectedly encounters his lord, he devotes himself to observing the protocol appropriate to a minister and subject.[73] When he meets a fellow villager, he makes it his object to employ all the courtesy due age and accomplishment. When he encounters an older person, he devotes himself to observing the demeanor of a son or younger brother. When he meets a friend, he devotes himself to showing the appropriate courtesies and rules, polite refusals, and yielding precedence. When he encounters someone of lower station or younger than himself, he devotes himself to the manner appropriate to guidance, instruction, magnanimity, and tolerance. There are none he does not love, none he does not respect, and none with whom he would contend. He is as complete as Heaven and Earth, which embrace the myriad things.[74] One who is like this esteems the worthy and is kind to those who are not worthy. Those who do not willingly submit to such a person can only be called eccentric or weird, a rogue or a rascal. Though they should be his own son or his younger brother, it is altogether fitting that he should permit the punishment to reach them. An Ode says:[75]

> Is not the Supreme Di Ancestor[76] always timely!
> Yin does not use the old ways,
> but though it lacks old and perfected men,
> still it has the corpus of punishments,
> yet none will listen to them.
> For this the Great Mandate is tumbling down.[77]

This expresses my meaning.

*6.11*

The ancients called "scholar-official"[78] those who exerted themselves with a generous earnestness, made the masses concordant, and took pleasure in riches and honors.[79] Such men took delight in dividing and sharing. They kept their distance from offenses and transgressions. They were devoted to their duties and to reasoned order and were ashamed to keep wealth for themselves alone.[80]

Those who today are called "scholar-officials" are base and reckless, given to villainy and anarchy, to self-indulgence and excesses of passion, and to sheer greed. They are offensive and insulting,[81] and they lack any sense of ritual principle or moral duty, except when motivated by the desire for positions of power and influence.

The ancients called "scholar-recluses" those who possessed the highest inner power, who were able to obtain Inner Quiet, and who cultivated uprightness, knew destiny, and manifested in their person what was right and true.

Those who today are called "scholar-recluses" lack ability but are said to have ability,[82] and lack knowledge but are said to have it. They are insatiably profit-minded but feign desirelessness. They are false and secretly foul in conduct but forceful and lofty in speaking about integrity and prudence. They take the extraordinary as the ordinary, behaving eccentrically and without restraint, out of conceit and self-indulgence.[83]

*6.12*

There are both some things a scholar and gentleman can do and others they cannot do.[84] The gentleman can do what is honorable, but he cannot cause others to be certain to show him honor. He can act in a trustworthy fashion, but he cannot cause others to be sure to trust him. He can act so that he is employable, but he cannot cause others to be certain to use him. Hence, the gentleman is ashamed not to cultivate himself, but he is not ashamed to appear to have flaws. He would be ashamed not to be trustworthy, but he is not ashamed that he does not appear trustable. He would be ashamed to be lacking in ability, but he is not ashamed that he remains unused. For these reasons, he is not seduced by praise and is not made apprehensive by criticism. Rather, he follows the Way in his conduct, truly intent on rectifying himself, and is not swayed or turned away from it by mere external things. One who is like this may be described as a "true gentleman." An Ode says:[85]

> Mildly gentle and reverent men
> alone possess the foundation for inner power.

This expresses my meaning.

*6.13*
*The Demeanor of the Scholar and Gentleman*[86]

When he plays the role of a father or elder brother, his cap should protrude straight out and his robes be full, his demeanor should be relaxed and his manner should be dignified, grave, inspiring, correct but comfortable to be around,[87] noble and imposing, broad-minded, enlightened, and calmly at ease.[88] When he plays the role of son or younger brother, his cap should protrude and his robes be full, his demeanor should be attentive, and his manner should be temperate,[89] confident, helpful, honest, constantly striving,[90] respectful, exemplary, and unassuming.[91]

Let me now discuss the conceited manner of your students. Their caps are bent low over their foreheads.[92] Their cap strings are loose and slack.[93] Their manner is insolent and rude. They seem smug and pretentious as they amble about,[94] but their eyes dart nervously around.[95]

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