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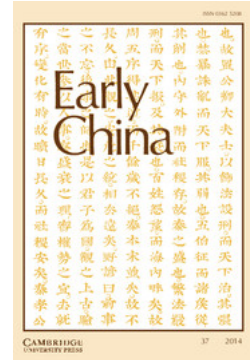
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Kuan-yun Huang

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## XUNZI'S CRITICISM OF ZISI—NEW PERSPECTIVES

Kuan-yun Huang\*

### Abstract

This study considers Xunzi's criticism of Zisi, Confucius' grandson, providing a detailed analysis of some of the most famous but also difficult passages in the *Xunzi*. By drawing on the newly excavated text, "Wuxing" (The five conducts), the study shows that not only did Xunzi have an intimate knowledge of Zisi's teachings, but in fact he had available to him a certain version of the "Wuxing." This understanding makes it possible to evaluate Xunzi's role as a reporter of Zisi's teachings, and to the extent that Xunzi reported these teachings fairly and accurately, the study offers specific suggestions for reimagining a period that has been little understood in Early Chinese intellectual history, or the transition from Confucius to Mencius.

### 1. Introduction

For a thinker who places the greatest emphasis of his teachings on the importance of learning, it should come as little surprise that Xunzi 荀子, active during the third century B.C.E., was thoroughly familiar with the major intellectual currents of his time.<sup>1</sup> In the collection of writings associated with him, there is the famous "Fei shier zi" 非十二子 (Contra twelve masters), in which Xunzi surveys some of the most

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\* Kuan-yun Huang, 黃冠雲, National Tsing Hua University; email: [kuanyun@mx.nthu.edu.tw](mailto:kuanyun@mx.nthu.edu.tw).

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1. The dates of Xunzi are somewhat unclear. Qian Mu 錢穆 in his *Xian Qin zhuzi xinian* 先秦諸子繫年 reviews the key events in Xunzi's life and suggests that they fall within the general period of 340–245 B.C.E.; see *Qian Binsi xiansheng quanji* 錢賓四先生全集 (Taipei: Lianjing, 1994), vol. 5, nos. 103, 136, 140, 143, 149, 151.

influential thinkers of his time. In the well-known “Xing e” 性惡 (Human nature is bad), Xunzi singles out his predecessor Mencius and articulates his own take on what was by now a controversial philosophical topic.<sup>2</sup>

Among the targets of Xunzi's criticism was Zisi 子思, or Kong Ji 孔伋, Confucius' grandson, a figure who was active in the fifth century B.C.E., and about whom little is known.<sup>3</sup> One early reference is in Confucius' biography in the “Kongzhi shijia” 孔子世家 (Hereditary household of Confucius) of the *Shi ji* 史記 (Records of history), which identifies Zisi as the author of the “Zhongyong” 中庸 (The use of the inner).<sup>4</sup> Elsewhere, in the “Yinyue zhi” 音樂志 (Musical treatise) of the *Suishu* 隋書 (Documents of Sui), the scholar Shen Yue 沈約 (441–513) reports that in a work identified as the *Zisizi* 子思子, the “Zhongyong” appears with three other texts: “Ziyi” 緇衣 (Black robe), “Fangji” 坊記 (Records of prevention), and “Biaoji” 表記 (Records of exterior garment).<sup>5</sup> In both of these testimonies, one finds a certain connection between Zisi and the “Zhongyong,” even though the precise nature of this connection raises many questions. It is by no means clear that the

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2. For the collection of writings associated with Xunzi, see Wang Xianqian 王先謙, Kubo Ai 久保愛, Ikai Hikohiro 猪飼彦博, and Hattori Unokichi 服部宇之吉, *Junshi* 荀子 (Kanbun taikai 漢文大系, vol. 15; Tōkyō: Fuzanbō, 1913). The standard translation into English is John Knoblock, *Xunzi: A Translation and Study of the Complete Works* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988–94). Throughout this study, I refer to Xunzi the thinker as the author of all the writings now found in *Xunzi* the text, but this is merely a measure of convenience. In fact, the text likely also contains writings prepared by followers of Xunzi as well as other materials regarded as important within that scholarly tradition. In the sense that these writings all center on Xunzi the thinker, they can be referred to by Xunzi's name. Important textual scholarship on *Xunzi* the text includes Kanaya Osamu 金谷治, “Junshi no bunkengaku teki kenkyū” 荀子の文献学的研究, in *Kanaya Osamu Chūgoku shisō ronshū* 金谷治中国思想論集 (Tōkyō: Hirakawa Shuppansha, 1997), vol. 2, 79–112; Toyoshima Mutsumi 豊島睦, “Junshi bunken hihan no ichi hōhō” 荀子文献批判の一方法, *Tetsugaku* 哲学 5 (1955), 59–71; and Tomoeda Ryūtarō 友枝竜太郎, “Junshi sakui setsu no keisei” 荀子作為説の形成, *Tōhōgaku* 東方學 4 (1952), 21–27. For a summary of these works, see Satō Masayuki 佐藤将之, “Ershi shiji Riben Xunzi yanjiu zhi huigu” 二十世紀日本荀子研究之回顧, *Guoli Zhengzhi daxue zhexue xuebao* 國立政治大學哲學學報 11 (2003), 42–49.

3. Although the dates of Zisi are uncertain, he is frequently mentioned in the literary record with Lu Mugong 魯穆公, and the latter figure's reign dates are 415–383 B.C.E.; see Qian Mu, *Xian Qin zhuzi xinian*, in *Qian Binsi xiansheng quanji*, vol. 5, nos. 47, 58. For an overview of the various problems in these sources on Zisi, see Mark Csikszentmihalyi, *Material Virtue: Ethics and the Body in Early China* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 86–100.

4. Takigawa Kametarō 瀧川亀太郎 and Mizusawa Toshitada 水澤利忠, *Shiji huizhu kaozheng fu jiaobu* 史記會注考證附校補 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji, 1986), 47.90–91.

5. *Suishu* 隋書 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1973), 13.288.

“Zhongyong” reported by the *Shi ji* as having been authored by Zisi is the same text now found in the *Liji* 禮記 (Records of the rites). And, in the same way, one wants to know how early the *Zisizi* reported by Shen Yue goes back. Is this a work with credible Warring States roots, or is it a later compilation, motivated by the claim of authorship recorded in the *Shi ji*? These questions have made it problematic to equate the “Zhongyong” with Zisi, and consequently they have obscured one’s perception of that figure.

In recent years, the discussion of Zisi’s thought has taken on renewed interest, thanks to the discovery of several important manuscripts. The first is a text excavated between 1973 and 1974 from the Han tomb at Mawangdui 馬王堆 in Hunan province.<sup>6</sup> Because this text mentions a sequence of five conducts, or *ren* 仁 “benevolence,” *yi* 義 “righteousness,” *li* 禮 “ritual,” *zhi* 智 “wisdom,” and *sheng* 聖 “sageness,” scholars have suggested that this is the teaching of *wuxing* 五行 “the five conducts,” for which Zisi is reprimanded in Xunzi’s “Fei shier zi.” Subsequently, in 1993, with the opening of the Warring States tomb at Guodian 郭店, Hubei province, a slightly different version of the same text is found, in fact, carrying the title of “Wuxing” 五行.<sup>7</sup> This second discovery is remarkable not only because the document is written in an earlier script, but also because it is accompanied by other texts variously linked with Zisi. Among these, the most notable is the “Ziyi,” the text that Shen Yue reports as belonging to the *Zisizi* with the “Zhongyong,” while another text, the “Lu Mugong wen Zisi” 魯穆公問子思 (Sire Mu asks Zisi) records a dialogue with Zisi as the main interlocutor. Given that in all of the texts from Guodian, Zisi is the only figure besides Confucius to be featured as a speaker, there can be no doubt that he is of some special importance to the Guodian corpus as a whole.<sup>8</sup>

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6. For the excavation report of Mawangdui tomb no. 3, where this text was found, see He Jiejun 何介均, ed., *Changsha Mawangdui er, san hao Hanmu* 長沙馬王堆二、三號漢墓 (Beijing: Wenwu, 2004), vol. 1. Photographs of the manuscript, together with the transcription, can be found in *Mawangdui Hanmu boshu* 馬王堆漢墓帛書 (Beijing: Wenwu, 1980), vol. 1. The tomb and the texts found in them can be dated around 168 B.C.E., since this date appears in one of the documents from the tomb.

7. For the excavation report of Guodian tomb no. 1, see “Jingmen Guodian yihao Chumu” 荊門郭店一號楚墓, *Wenwu* 文物 1997.7: 35–48. Photographs of the manuscript, together with the transcription, can be found in *Guodian Chumu zhujian* 郭店楚墓竹簡 (Beijing: Wenwu, 1998). Based on archaeological evidence, scholars date this tomb to the late fourth century B.C.E. For a convenient summary of the arguments, see Li Xueqin 李學勤, “Kong Meng zhi jian yu Lao Zhuang zhi jian” 孔孟之間與老莊之間, in *Wenwu zhong de gu wenming* 文物中的古文明 (Beijing: Shangwu, 2008), 400–407.

8. Based on the Guodian discoveries, a number of scholars now advocate or at least consider the possibility of a Zisi–Mencius scholarly lineage, as can be seen in two recent

All of this interest surrounding Zisi, both traditional and more recent, makes the recovery of his teachings a critical problem in the study of Early Chinese thought. It also provides the background for the present study, even though what I propose to do is somewhat limited in scope, only to consider what Xunzi thought of Zisi.<sup>9</sup> In particular, I wish to focus on one of Xunzi's writings, the "Jie bi" 解蔽 (Dispelling doubt), which I believe contains a veiled reference to Zisi. On the basis of this reading, it is possible to suggest new interpretations for two additional texts from Xunzi: the "Bugou" 不苟 (Nothing indecorous) and, as mentioned above, the famous criticism of Zisi in the "Fei shier zi." By comparing these three texts with the newly excavated "Wuxing," I will demonstrate that not only was Xunzi familiar with the teachings contained in this text, but in fact he identified them as the teachings of Zisi. Ultimately, Xunzi disapproved of Zisi, yet he did not do so without first gaining an intimate knowledge of the latter's teachings, sometimes even appropriating his style and diction. This understanding makes it possible to evaluate Xunzi's role as a reporter of Zisi's teachings, and to the extent that Xunzi reported these teachings fairly and accurately, the findings of this study will provide important clues for reimagining a period that has been little understood in Early Chinese intellectual history, or the transition from Confucius to Mencius.

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collections of papers: Du Weiming 杜維明 (Tu Weiming), ed., *Sixiang, wenxian, lishi: Si Meng xuepai xintan* 思想、文獻、歷史：思孟學派新探 (Beijing: Beijing daxue, 2008), and *Rujia Si Meng xuepai lunji* 儒家思孟學派論集 (Ji'nan: Qi Lu, 2008). For two monographs with expansive discussions of this topic, see Liang Tao 梁濤, *Guodian zhujian yu Si Meng xuepai* 郭店竹簡與思孟學派 (Beijing: Zhongguo renmin daxue, 2008), and Kong Deli 孔德立, *Zaoqi Rujia rendao sixiang de xingcheng yu yanbian: yi Zisi wei zhongxin* 早期儒家人道思想的形成與演變：以子思為中心 (Chengdu: Ba Shu, 2010).

9. For general accounts of Xunzi's thought, see Benjamin I. Schwartz, *The World of Thought in Ancient China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985), 290–320; A.C. Graham, *Disputers of the Tao: Philosophical Argument in Ancient China* (La Salle, IL: Open Court, 1989), 235–67; and David Shepherd Nivison, "The Classical Philosophical Writings," in *The Cambridge History of Ancient China: From the Origins of Civilization to 221 B.C.*, ed. Edward L. Shaughnessy and Michael Loewe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 790–99. Also useful are Nivison's two articles: "Hsun Tzu and Chuang Tzu," in *Chinese Texts and Philosophical Contexts: Essays Dedicated to Angus C. Graham*, ed. Henry Rosemont, Jr. (La Salle, IL: Open Court, 1991), 129–42; and "Xunzi on 'Human Nature,'" in Nivison, *The Ways of Confucianism* (Chicago: Open Court, 1991), 203–13. The last item is now supplemented by the same author's "Response to James Behuniak," *Philosophy East and West* 50.1 (2000), 110–15, and his comments in the preface of Ni Dewei 倪德衛 (Nivison), *Rujia zhi dao: Zhongguo zhexue zhi tantao* 儒家之道：中國哲學之探討 (Nanjing: Jiangsu renmin, 2006), i–ii.

## 1.1 The “Jie bi” (Dispelling doubt)

My discussion of Xunzi begins with the following passage from the “Jie bi” 解蔽 (Dispelling doubt):

空石之中有人焉，其名曰觚。其為人也，善射以好思。耳目之欲接，則敗其思；蚊蠃之聲聞，則挫其精。是以闕耳目之欲，而遠蚊蠃之聲，閑居靜思則通。思仁若是，可謂微乎？孟子惡敗而出妻，可謂能自彊矣；未及思也。有子惡臥而燂掌，可謂能自忍矣；未及好也。闕耳目之欲，遠蚊蠃之聲，可謂危矣，未可謂微也。夫微者，至人也。至人也，何彊，何忍，何危？故濁明外景，清明內景。聖人縱其欲，兼其情，而制焉者理矣。夫何彊，何忍，何危？故仁者之行道也，無為也；聖人之道也，無彊也。仁者之思也恭，聖者之思也樂，此治心之道也。<sup>10</sup>

There was a man who lived in a stone cave whose name was Ji. He was the kind of man who was expert at guessing riddles, which he was fond of pondering. But if he came in contact with the desires of the eyes and ears, then his thoughts would be shattered. If he heard the sounds of mosquitoes or gnats, it would destroy his concentration. For this reason, he avoided the desires of the eyes and ears and went far away from the sounds of mosquitoes and gnats. So he lived in leisure and pondered in quietude until he completely understood. To ponder the principle of benevolence like this, could this be called subtle? Mencius hated impropriety and turned his wife out. This could be said to show he had personal strength of will but that he never reached real thought. Master You hated lying down, so he burned the palm of his hand. This could be said to show that he was able to exercise self-endurance, but that he never reached real devotion. To avoid the desires of the eyes and ears and go far away from the sounds of mosquitoes and gnats could be called anxiously keeping oneself on guard, but could never be called subtle. True subtlety is the quality of the perfect man. What need has the perfect man for strength of will, for endurance, or for anxiously keeping himself on guard? Thus, a muddied brightness casts an external shadow, and a pure brightness shows a reflection from within. The sage follows his desires and fulfills<sup>11</sup> his feelings, but accords with rational principles of order in his regulation of them. Truly what need has he for strength of will, for endurance, or for

10. Wang Xianqian, Kubo Ai, Ikai Hikohiro, and Hattori Unokichi, *Junshi*, 15.20–22. As the commentators Guo Songtao 郭高燾 and Hao Yixing 郝懿行 point out, there is a section in the middle of the passage that seems to be corrupt, and I have followed their suggestions in emending it. These are the same emendations accepted by Knoblock in his *Xunzi: A Translation and Study of the Complete Works*, vol. 3, 108, which I have consulted for my translation.

11. Here it is possible to read *jian* 兼 as *qie* 慊 “to fulfill.” The reason will become clear in the discussion of the “Daxue” 大學 below.

anxiously keeping himself on guard? Thus, the benevolent man's practice of the way requires no action. The sage's practice of the way requires no strength of will. The thought of the benevolent man is reverent, and the thought of the sage is joyous. This is the way of putting the mind in order.

In this passage, Xunzi identifies a certain figure named Ji 皃, who is *haosi* 好思 "fond of meditation" and who in his attempt to abstain from his desires, avoids such small distractions as the sound of mosquitoes or gnats. According to Xunzi's description, these things would get in the way of his *xianju jingsi* 閑居靜思 "living in leisure and pondering in quietude." None of this is approved by Xunzi as he asks the question: 思仁若是，可謂微乎 "To ponder the principle of benevolence like this, could this be called subtle?"

By comparing the "Jie bi," particularly Xunzi's rhetorical question, with the newly excavated "Wuxing," it is immediately apparent that the two are closely related with one another. The "Wuxing" contains a statement (slips 12–13): 慧 (仁) 之思也清 (精)<sup>12</sup> "The thought of benevolence is refined," for which the expression *ren zhi si* 仁之思 "the thought of benevolence" resembles *si ren* 思仁 "to ponder the principle of benevolence" in the "Jie bi." And the words *jing* 精 "refined" and *wei* 微 "subtle" are near synonyms. It is evident that Xunzi is adopting the language of the "Wuxing" in raising questions about the very claims stated in that text. This is the reason that the "Jie bi" ends with the assertion: 仁者之思也恭，聖者之思也樂，此治心之道也 "The thought of the benevolent man is reverent, and the thought of the sage is joyous; this is the way of putting the mind in order." This bears a closer resemblance to the same statement from the "Wuxing" and can be said to be an attempt to rewrite that text.

To further make sense of the "Jie bi," it is possible to look more closely at the description of the man living in a stone cave. Alone, this person engages in a kind of intellectual activity described by Xunzi as *xianju jingsi* "to live in leisure and ponder in quietude." Here the expression *xianju* 閑居 "to live in leisure" is key, for it describes a person's detachment from others and provides a clue for understanding Xunzi's comment about Mencius, said to have divorced his wife for reasons unexplained in the "Jie bi." In a fuller account of this episode, now found in the *Hanshi waizhuan* 韓詩外傳 (Outer commentaries of the Han tradition of the *Odes*), one finds that the reason is due to the behavior of Mencius' wife on one occasion, when she is by herself:

12. This sentence is written as the following in the Mawangdui text: 仁之思也晴.

孟子妻獨居，踞，孟子入戶視之；白其母曰：「婦無禮，請去之。」

Mencius' wife was alone, with her legs spread open. Mencius entered the door and saw her. He told his mother: "My wife has no sense of propriety, and I would like to send her away."<sup>13</sup>

Here the word *du* 獨 gives away the reason for Mencius' strong reaction: the wife has failed to mind her behavior even when she is under no one's watch.

Once again, comparing the account about Mencius with the "Wuxing," it should come as little surprise that the "Wuxing" (ss. 16, 17–18) repeatedly evokes the notion of *shen qi du* 認 (慎) 兀 (其) 蜀 (獨)<sup>14</sup> "to be watchful over oneself when alone."<sup>15</sup> Thus it is the concern with how one should behave when alone, as illustrated by

13. Xu Weiyu 許維通, *Hanshi waizhuan jishi* 韓詩外傳集釋 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1980), 9.322. The same story appears in *Lienü zhuan* 列女傳 "Muyi" 母儀, though this account leaves out the detail about the woman's sitting posture; see *Gu Lienü zhuan zhuzi suoysin* 古列女傳逐字索引, Institute for Chinese Studies Concordance (Hong Kong: Commercial Press, 1992), 1.9. Other related discussions can be found in *Xinshu* 新書 "Taijiao" 胎教, where the wife of Wuwang 武王 of the Western Zhou is praised for *duchu bu ju* 獨處不倨 "when alone she does not squat"; see Yan Zhenyi 閻振益 and Zhong Xia 鍾夏, *Xinshu jiaozhu* 新書校注 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 2000), 391, and the close parallel in Huang Huaixin 黃懷信, *Da Dai lijì huìjiào jìzhū* 大戴禮記彙校集注 (Xi'an: San Qin, 2005), 417–19, where the same phrase is given as *duchu er buju* 獨處而不倨. Note that *Liji* 禮記 "Quli" 曲禮 has the prescription: 坐毋箕 "When sitting, do not squat"; see Li Xueqin 李學勤, ed., *Liji zhengyi* 禮記正義 (traditional character edition; Beijing: Beijing daxue, 2000), 56.

14. This expression is written as the following in the Mawangdui text: 慎其獨。

15. Although the "Wuxing" does not elaborate on the meaning of this expression and seems to assume that it is already well known, a "commentary" of the "Wuxing," seen only in the Mawangdui text, discusses it quite extensively. This is a subject that I take up in another article, "'Liuti,' 'Liuxing' yu zaoqi Rujia sixiang de yige zhuanzhe" 「流體」、「流形」與早期儒家思想的一個轉折, *Jianbo* 簡帛 6 (2011), 387–98. Here it suffices to point out that in both the "Wuxing" and its "commentary," the expression is closely embedded in the reading of two poems now found in the *Book of Odes*, "Shijiu" 鸚鳩 and "Yanyan" 燕燕. For the latter, a related text in the *Yilin* 易林, found under the "Heng" 恆 hexagram, has the following: 燕雀衰老，悲鳴入海，憂在不飾，差池其羽，頡頏上下，寡位獨處 "The tiny swallow, weak and old, sadly crying, it enters the seas / Grieving, it thinks not of its plumage, in disarray are its feathers / It plummets and soars, up and down, a lonely place, a solitary home"; see Shang Binghe 尚秉和, *Jiaoshi Yilin zhu* 焦氏易林注, in *Shangshi Yixue cunqao jiaoli* 尚氏易學存稿校理 (Beijing: Zhongguo da baikē quanshu, 2005), vol. 2, 561–62. The translation is from Jeffrey Riegel, "Eros, Introversion, and the Beginnings of *Shijing* Commentary," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 57.1 (1997), 168–69, which also contains a discussion of this passage.



Mencius and the man living in a stone cave, that is the target of Xunzi's criticism.<sup>16</sup>

In Xunzi's discussion in the "Jie bi," he raises the question: 夫微者，至人也；至人也，何彊，何忍，何危？"True subtlety is the quality of the perfect man; what need has the perfect man for strength of will, for endurance, or for anxiously keeping himself on guard?" Here Xunzi is reserving the term *wei* 微 "subtlety" for his ideal of the *zhiren* 至人 "perfect man," and this is contrasted against *qiang* 彊 "strength of will," *ren* 忍 "endurance," and especially *wei* 危 "anxiously keeping oneself on guard," all of which are straining efforts that do not capture the essence of self-cultivation.<sup>17</sup>

According to Xunzi, true cultivation is for one to not force his or her efforts, as do the other figures, but instead *zong qi yu, jian qi qing* 縱其欲，兼其情 "to follow his desires and fulfill his feelings." The "Jie bi" goes on to suggest the following: 故仁者之行道也，無為也；聖人之行道也，無彊也 "Thus, the benevolent man's practice of the way requires no action. The sage's practice of the way requires no strength of will." This is followed by the definition of *zhixin zhi dao* 治心之道 "the way of ordering the mind" as the following: 仁者之思也恭，聖者之思也樂 "The thought of the benevolent man is reverent, and the thought of the sage is joyous." That is to say, it is through *wuwei* 無為 "no action" and *wuqiang* 無彊 "no strength of will" that one will realize *ren* and *sheng*.<sup>18</sup> Here note that Xunzi does not call for one to simply let go of one's desires and feelings. Although such freedom is highly desirable, it is to be attained only after a long and gradual process.

16. When the "Jie bi" suggests that Youzi 有子 *wu wo* 惡臥 "hated lying down," this draws one's attention to a passage in the "commentary" of the "Wuxing," which cites the "Guanju" 關雎 from the *Book of Odes* in painting a vivid picture of a man lying alone at night, overwhelmed by his sexual desire. Perhaps Youzi disliked lying down because he was averse to the kind of sexual desire experienced by the protagonist of the "Guanju." For a penetrating discussion of this passage from the "commentary" of the "Wuxing," see Riegel, "Eros, Introversion, and the Beginnings of *Shijing* Commentary," 149–59.

The "Guanju" is also relevant to the present study, because as so cogently argued by Riegel, the identity of the protagonist undergoes a shift from male to female between the "commentary" of the "Wuxing" and the interpretations of the early commentators Mao 毛 and Zheng Xuan 鄭玄. Here the emphasis on the female rather than male sex resonates with Mencius' disapproval of his wife, mentioned both in the "Jie bi" and the *Hanshi waizhuan*, and it hints at that thinker's involvement in the shift of attention from the male to the female in early self-cultivation.

17. For further discussion of the distinction between *wei* 危 and *wei* 微, see below.

18. For similar portrayals of the ideal person in the *Xunzi*, including analysis of a part of the "Jie bi" passage under consideration, see Edward Slingerland, *Effortless Action: Wu-wei as Conceptual Metaphor and Spiritual Ideal in Early China* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 246–52.

This process, not featured in the “Jie bi,” is explained in more detail in the “Bugou,” which I will turn to momentarily.

In the end, having considered Xunzi’s comment in the “Jie bi,” one cannot help but be reminded that there is a name to the man who lives in a stone cave. This is Ji 倮, which would have been another way of writing Ji 伋, the personal name of Zisi. Since the two characters would have recorded the same or nearly the same sound, they would have referred to the same figure. If this suggestion is correct, then given the close connection between the “Jie bi” and the “Wuxing”—the former draws upon the latter’s literary form to criticize its philosophical position—then it is to the “Wuxing” that one should turn for Zisi’s teachings as understood by Xunzi.<sup>19</sup>

For similar disapprovals of the notion of *shen qi du* or the concern with oneself when alone, it is possible to turn to several other texts. The first is a passage found in *Liji* “Liqi” 禮器 (Ritual objects):

禮之以多為貴者，以其外心者也。德發揚，詡<sup>20</sup> 萬物，大理物博。<sup>21</sup> 如此，則得不以多為貴乎？故君子樂其發也。禮之以少為貴者，以其內心者也。德產之致也精微，觀天下之物，無可以稱其德者。如此，則得不以

19. The identification of Ji as Zisi is, as far as I know, first made by the authors of *Xunzi xinzhù* 荀子新注 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1979), 358n1, and it is more recently commented on by Liang Tao, who also notes the similarity in language between the “Jie bi” and “Wuxing”; see *Guodian zhujian yu Si Meng xuepai*, 229–30. These observations are the basis for my study, though I differ from previous scholars in suggesting that the notion of *shen qi du*, or the concern with oneself when alone, has a central place in the “Jie bi.” For previous discussions of this important notion, see the insightful study by Shimamori Tetsuo 島森哲男, “Shindoku no shisō” 慎獨の思想, *Bunka* 文化 42.3–4 (1979), 1–14; Ikeda Tomohisa 池田知久, *Maōtai Kanbo hakusho gogyōhen kenkyū* 馬王堆漢墓帛書五行篇研究 (Tōkyō: Kyūko Shoin, 1993), 136–51; and Riegel, “Eros, Introversion, and the Beginnings of *Shijing* Commentary,” 159–71. Among these, Ikeda’s monograph is especially useful because it surveys the major scholarship in Chinese and Japanese up to 1991. Another noteworthy title is Liang Tao, ed., *Chutu wenxian yu junzi shendu* 出土文獻與君子慎獨 (Guilin: Lijiang, 2011), which brings together many recent studies on the topic of *shen qi du*. Two additional discussions are Guo Qiyong 郭齊勇, “Guodian Chujian ‘Wuxing’ de shenxin guan yu daode lun” 郭店楚簡《五行》的身心觀與道德論, in *Zhongguo zhexue zhihui de tansuo* 中國哲學智慧的探索 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 2008), 55–66, and Xie Junzhi 謝君直, *Guodian Chujian Rujia zhexue yanjiu* 郭店楚簡儒家哲學研究 (Taipei: Wanjuan lou, 2008), 65–71.

20. For the word *xu* 詡, this is glossed by Zheng Xuan as *pu* 普 or *pian* 徧, both meaning “to spread.”

21. For the phrase *dali wubo* 大理物博, Kong Yingda 孔穎達 paraphrases it as the following: 言王者大領理萬物之事，廣博如此 “This is saying that the king greatly puts in order the affairs of the myriad things, and it is vast in this way.” This suggests the following punctuation by Kong: \*德發揚，詡萬物，大理物博如此, a decision that is somewhat implausible because it breaks the parallel with the second part of the passage.

少為貴乎？是故君子慎其獨也。古之聖人，內之為尊，外之為樂；少之為貴，多之為美。是故先王之制禮也，不可多也，不可寡也，唯其稱也。<sup>22</sup>

For the rites, "many" is regarded as valuable; this is on account of the outer mind. When virtue is displayed, it spreads to the myriad things, and it greatly puts in order the vastness of things. In this way, how is it that "many" is not regarded as valuable? Thus the gentleman delights in his public display. For the rites, "few" is regarded as valuable; this is on account of the inner mind. The generation of virtue in its utmost is such that it is refined and subtle. When all the things in the world are observed, none is equal to it in its virtue. In this way, how is it that "few" is not regarded as valuable? Thus the gentleman is watchful over himself when alone. The sages of antiquity are reverent on the inside and delightful on the outside; they regard few as valuable and many as good. Thus, when the former kings instituted the rites, they were neither too many nor too few, but just the right amount.

Ostensibly, this passage discusses in rather favorable terms the notion of *shen qi du*. In speaking of the power of virtue, or *de chan zhi zhi* 德產之致 "the generation of virtue in its utmost," it suggests that it is *jingwei* 精微 "refined and subtle," an expression reminiscent of the discussion of *ren* in the "Wuxing" and "Jie bi." However, the reference to *shen qi du* in this text is contrasted with the parallel expression: 君子樂其發也 "the gentleman delights in his public display," which, in providing a counterbalance to *shen qi du*, introduces the notion of *cheng* 稱 "the right amount" at the very end of the discussion. That the "Liqi" finds it necessary to emphasize a balanced position suggests a certain reservation towards the notion of *shen qi du*, perhaps not unlike what one finds in the "Jie bi."<sup>23</sup>

The second passage is a comment attributed to the ancient sage Tang 湯, found in *Xinshu* 新書 (New Documents) "Xiuzheng yu shang" 脩政語上 (Words about cultivating rule, first part):

學聖王之道者，譬其如日；靜思而獨居，譬其若火。夫人舍學聖王之道，而靜居獨思，譬其若去日之明於庭，而就火之光於室也。然可以小見，而不可以大知。<sup>24</sup>

Studying the way of the sagely kings can be compared to the sun. Meditating quietly and living alone can be compared to candlelight. For people to discard studying the sagely kings and instead to live quietly

22. Li Xueqin, ed., *Liji zhengyi*, 855–57.

23. Cf. Riegel, "Eros, Introversion, and the Beginnings of *Shijing* Commentary," 167.

24. Yan Zhenyi and Zhong Xia, *Xinshu jiaozhu*, 361–62.

and meditate alone, this is like leaving behind the sun's brightness in the courtyard and going to the candlelight in the room. This enables one to observe petty things but not to know what is great.

According to this discussion, the unproblematic choice of following the sages is contrasted with *jingsi er duju* 靜思而獨居 "to meditate quietly and live alone," a phrase parallel to *xianju jingsi* "living in leisure and pondering in quietude" from the "Jie bi." The latter pales in comparison to the former, just as candlelight is no match for the sun. As the passage goes on to explain in a later part of the text, in order to learn from the sages, one should choose one's company carefully. This is seen in a statement: 是以明君慎其舉，而君子慎其與 "Thus the enlightened is careful with his promotions, and the gentleman is careful with his associates," a formulation that not only makes a pun on the phonologically similar *ju* 舉 (\*k(r/l)ja') and *yu* 與 (\*lja'), but also is clearly based on the injunction, *junzi shen qi du*.<sup>25</sup> Once again, as in the "Jie bi," the language of discussions of *shen qi du* is borrowed to present a critical view on that very notion.

Finally, a passage from *Shuoyuan* 說苑 (Garden of sayings) "Jian ben" 建本 (Establishing the basic) features Zisi himself and contains a contrast between learning and meditating not unlike what one finds in the "Xiuzheng yu shang." According to this text:

子曰：「學所以益才也，礪所以致刃也。吾嘗幽處而深思矣，不若學之速；吾嘗跂而望矣，不若登高之博見。故順風而呼，聲不加疾而聞者眾；登丘而招，臂不加長而見者遠。」故魚乘於水，鳥乘於風，草木乘於時。<sup>26</sup>

Zisi said: "Learning is what increases one's ability, and grinding is what results in the blade. I once spent time in seclusion and meditated deeply, but it was not so expeditious as learning. 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. Thus, shouting downwind does not increase the tenseness of the sound, but it is heard more distinctly. Climbing to a height and waving one's arm does not cause the arm's length to increase, but the wave can be seen farther away. Thus, fishes ride the wave, birds ride the wind, and plants and trees ride the season."

At first glance, what Zisi says seems directly based on Confucius' statement in the *Lun yu* 論語 (The Analects) 15.31: 吾嘗終日不食，終夜不

25. Old Chinese reconstructions are based on William H. Baxter, *A Handbook of Old Chinese Phonology* (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1992).

26. Zuo Songchao 左松超, *Shuoyuan jizheng* 說苑集證 (Taipei: Guoli bianyi guan, 2000), 170-71. For a parallel to this passage, see Fu Yashu 傅亞庶, *Kongcongzi jiaoshi* 孔叢子校釋 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 2011), 110-11.

寢，以思，無益，不如學也 “Once I went without food all day and without sleep all night thinking, but I found that this did me no good at all. It would have been better for me to have spent the time in learning.”<sup>27</sup> But, in many ways, the text reads less like a report of Zisi’s teaching than a fictionalized account, perhaps even a caricature of him based on Xunzi’s views. Notice that the association of Zisi with meditation resembles the “Jie bi” description of the man living in a stone cave. For Zisi to reject his own position and to opt instead for learning, a major concern for Xunzi, this also suggests the involvement of that latter figure; and in fact the language of the “Jian ben” corresponds rather closely to Xunzi’s “Quan xue” 勸學 (Exhortation to learning).<sup>28</sup> If this understanding is correct, then it is possible to read the “Jian ben” together with the other texts considered above. What distinguishes the “Jian ben” is that instead of borrowing from the language of Zisi, it actually takes over his persona in order to recast a wholly different image of him.

## 1.2 The “Bugou” (Nothing indecorous)

What exactly is *shen qi du* 慎其獨? As seen in the three texts considered above, *Liji* “Liqi” (which identifies it) as well as *Xinshu* “Xiuzheng yu shang” and Xunzi’s “Jie bi” (which do not), *du* 獨 is the situation in which a person is alone, and *shen qi du* means that one should be cautious in just such a situation, in which one is under no one’s watch and as a result must be on guard against any impropriety or transgression. By extension, *shen qi du* implies a self-focus whereby one is attentive to even the minutest movements of one’s mind. It is in this introspective and somewhat elusive sense that Xunzi takes on the same expression in the “Bugou” 不苟 (Nothing indecorous).<sup>29</sup>

27. Cheng Shude 程樹德, *Lun yu jishi* 論語集釋 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1990), 1118–19. Of course, in *Lun yu* 2.15, one also reads the following: 學而不思則罔，思而不學則殆 “If one learns from others but does not think, one will be bewildered. If, on the other hand, one thinks but does not learn from others, one will be imperiled,” see pp. 103–4. Read together, what these two passages suggest is that Confucius does not advocate *only* learning or *only* thinking. All the translations are from D.C. Lau, *The Analects* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1992).

28. For the “Quan xue” passage that resembles the “Jian ben,” see Wang Xianqian, Kubo Ai, Ikai Hikohiro, and Hattori Unokichi, *Junshi*, 1.4.

29. Wang Xianqian, et al., *Junshi*, 2.11–14, and the translation in Knoblock, *Xunzi: A Translation and Study of the Complete Works*, vol. 1, 177–79. The relevance of the “Bugou” to the “Wuxing” is already noted in several previous studies on that excavated text; see Riegel, “Eros, Introversión, and the Beginnings of *Shijing* Commentary,” 165, and Scott Cook, “Consummate Artistry and Moral Virtuosity: The ‘Wuxing’ Essay and Its Aesthetic Implications,” *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews* 22 (2000), 136n58.

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In this “highly-crafted representation of Xunzi’s most mature thinking and his masterful ability to exploit the aphorisms and poetical imagery of ancient Chinese philosophical discourse,”<sup>30</sup> Xunzi is unambiguous about his conception of *du* and *shen qi du*. According to Xunzi: 善之為道者，不誠則不獨，不獨則不形 “Though one is adept at acting in accord with the way, if one lacks sincerity, one will not be self-reflecting; not being self-reflecting, one will not have it taken shape within.” Here *du* “self-reflecting” is one stage in a process whereby one generates virtue within oneself and ultimately becomes one with nature, a result described with considerable detail in the “Bugou.” Interestingly, for one to get to *du*, first one must attain the ideal of *cheng* 誠 “sincerity,” and the importance of this latter notion can be seen by its position at the very beginning of the passage: 君子養心莫善於誠，致誠則無它事矣 “For the gentleman to nurture his mind, nothing is more excellent than sincerity; having attained to sincerity, there will be no other concern.” It is also for the same reason that Xunzi says *zhi qi cheng* 至其誠 “to attain to sincerity” before he evokes the well-known expression of *shen qi du*.<sup>31</sup> In this way, by shifting emphasis away from *shen qi du*, the “Bugou” resonates with the “Jie bi,” in which, as one recalls, Xunzi speaks rather critically of the man whose aloneness in a cave resembles what is described by the word *du* elsewhere in the literary record. By the time one reads in the “Bugou” the following sentence: 君子至德，嘿然而喻，未施而親，不怒而威 “When the gentleman has attained to virtue, 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,” it is difficult not to think of the emphasis in the “Jie bi” on *wuwei* 無為 “no action” and *wuqiang* 無彊 “no strength of will.” For the “Bugou” to suggest that

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For an extensive treatment of this passage, see Sato Masayuki, *The Confucian Quest for Order: The Origin and Formation of the Political Thought of Xun Zi* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 286–302.

30. Riegel, “Eros, Introversion, and the Beginnings of *Shijing* Commentary,” 165.

31. The history of the term *cheng* is complex and is only indirectly related to the present discussion. It suffices to say that the term itself does not appear in the Guodian texts (though a closely related term, *cheng* 成 “to complete,” does appear in the “Cheng zhi wen zhi” 成之聞之). By the time of Mencius, the term seems to be fully established and has a usage consistent with the “Zhongyong” and “Daxue” 大學, i.e. “sincerity.” It would appear, then, that the term came into prominence sometime between the Guodian texts and Mencius, and in so doing drew on a pair of terms with generally the same meaning, *zhong* 忠 and *xin* 信, which are attested in the Guodian text “Zhongxin zhi dao” 忠信之道. If one is of the view that both the “Zhongyong” and “Daxue” have complex makeups, consisting of many layers, then it is perhaps to the earlier strata of those texts that one should trace the origin of *cheng*.

the gentleman can have an impact without acting (or what is conventionally regarded as acting), this resembles the freedom described in the "Jie bi."

With regard to the final statement of the "Bugou," 濟而材盡，長遷而不反其初，則化矣 "Brought to fulfillment, his talents completely realized, continually progressing, and never reverting to his beginnings, he has indeed undergone transmutation," it is possible to note a connection with the newly excavated "Wuxing," or more precisely, the tradition in which this text is embedded. The "Wuxing" contains a technical term *ji* 幾 "to get close to," which appears in the formulation (s. 48): 幾而嚮 (知) 之，天也 "To get close to and to know it, this is heaven." Although the "Wuxing" itself offers few clues as to what this means, the "commentary" (ll. 343-44) has the following explanation:

「幾 (幾) 而知之，天也」，幾 (幾) 也者，齋數也。唯有天德者，然尙 (後) 幾 (幾) 而知之。

"To get close to and to know it, this is heaven." *Ji* "to get close to" is *ji shu*.  
Only by having the virtue of heaven does one get close to and know it.

Here, in commenting on the word *ji* (written as 幾), the "commentary" introduces another technical term, *ji shu* 齋數. Whereas *shu* 數 is what is pre-determined, the laws of nature, perhaps not unlike "fate," *ji* 齋 can be tied with *ji* 濟 in the "Bugou" (since they are from the same phonetic series and would have sounded the same or nearly the same). This gives *ji shu* the sense of "fulfilling what has been pre-determined," an understanding supported by what the "Bugou" says above: 變化代興，謂之天德 "To cause transmutation and transformation to flourish in succession is called the 'virtue of heaven,'" in which the expression *tiande* 天德 "virtue of heaven" is precisely what one finds in the "commentary": 唯有天德者，然後幾而知之 "Only by having the virtue of heaven does one get close to and know it."<sup>32</sup>

32. Related to this, note that *Lüshi chunqiu* 呂氏春秋 "Dayue" 大樂 contains the statement: 有知不見之見、不聞之聞、無狀之狀者，則幾於知之矣 "Whoever is aware of the visible in the invisible, the audible in the inaudible, and the form of the formless gets close to knowing it." Here the usage of *ji* "to get close to" and its juxtaposition with *zhi* 知 "to know" resembles the "Wuxing." Interestingly, the passage goes on to say the following: 能以一治其身者，免於災，終其壽，全其天 "A man capable of governing his own person with unity avoids calamity, lives out the full span of his life, keeps his natural endowment intact," where the expression *quan qi tian* 全其天 "to keep one's natural endowment intact" is clearly related to *ji shu* in the "commentary" of the "Wuxing" as well as the expression *ji er cai jin* 濟而材盡 "brought to fulfillment, one's talents completely realized" in the "Bugou." For the *Lüshi chunqiu*, see Chen Qiyou 陳奇猷, *Lüshi chunqiu xin jiaoshi* 呂氏春秋新校釋 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji,

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Because the expression *ji shu* appears only in the “commentary” of the “Wuxing” and not in the “Wuxing” itself, it is difficult, given the lack of a more fixed date for the “commentary,” to speculate on its precise relation with Xunzi. Nevertheless, the “commentary” is helpful for understanding the “Bugou,” particularly the process of self-cultivation outlined in that text. For Xunzi, the purpose of this process is to accept the capacities with which one has been endowed and to constantly work on them until one is thoroughly transformed. In this context, *shen qi du* implies a certain restraint over one’s natural inclinations. Having done this, as seen in both the “Jie bi” and the earlier parts of the “Bugou,” it is then possible to gradually attain a state in which one’s actions are effortless and unrestrained. If this understanding is correct, then one has here further evidence of the tight connection between Xunzi and the “Wuxing” or its tradition. Of course, in light of the overall context of the “Jie bi” and “Bugou,” it is evident that this connection is exploited by Xunzi for his own purposes.

The “Bugou” passage can be cited in full:

君子養心莫善於誠，致誠則無它事矣。唯仁之為守，唯義之為行。誠心守仁則形，形則神，神則能化矣；誠心行義則理，理則明，明則能變矣。變化代興，謂之天德。天不言而人推高焉，地不言而人推厚焉，四時不言而百姓期焉。夫此有常，以至於其誠者也。君子至德，嘿然而喻，未施而親，不怒而威。夫此順命，以慎其獨者也。善之為道者，不誠則不獨，不獨則不形，不形則雖作於心，見於色，出於言，民猶若未從也；雖從必疑。天地為大矣，不誠則不能化萬物；聖人為知矣，不誠則不能化萬民；父子為親矣，不誠則疏；君上為尊矣，不誠則卑。夫誠者，君子之所守也，而政事之本也，唯所居以其類至。操之則得之，舍之則失之。操而得之則輕，輕則獨行，獨行而不舍，則濟矣；濟而材盡，長遷而不反其初，則化矣。<sup>33</sup>

For the gentleman to nurture his mind, nothing is more excellent than sincerity. If a man has attained to sincerity, he will have no other concern than to uphold the principle of benevolence and to behave with righteousness. If with a sincere mind he upholds the principle of benevolence, the mind will be given form. Having been given form, it becomes intelligible. Having become intelligible, it can result in transmutation. If with a sincere mind he behaves with righteousness, the mind will accord with natural order. According with natural order, it will become clear. Having become clear,

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2002), 259–90. I have also consulted the translation in John Knoblock and Jeffrey Riegel, *The Annals of Lü Buwei: A Complete Translation and Study* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 138–39.

33. Wang Xianqian, et al., *Junshi*, 2.11–14. The translation has consulted Knoblock, *Xunzi: A Translation and Study of the Complete Works*, vol. 1, 177–79.



it can result in transformation. To cause transmutation and transformation to flourish in succession is called the "virtue of heaven." Though heaven does not speak, the humans can infer that it is high; though the earth does not speak, the humans can infer that it is thick; though the four seasons do not speak, the hundred clans anticipate their proper sequence. Possessing this regularity is what attains to sincerity. When the gentleman has attained to virtue, 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. Complying with his fate is what causes him to be watchful over himself when alone. Though a man is adept at acting in accord with the way, if he lacks sincerity, he will not be self-reflecting. Not being self-reflecting, he will not have it taken shape within. Not having it taken shape within, though he creates it in his mind, displays his intentions on his face, and expresses his will in words, the common people will be as though they do not follow him, and insofar as they must, it will be with suspicion. Heaven and earth are indeed great, but were they to lack sincerity, they could not transmute the myriad things. Sages to be sure are wise, but were they to lack sincerity, they could not transmute the people. Fathers and sons naturally possess affection for each other, but were they to lack sincerity, they could drift apart. The ruler being superior in position is honored, but were he to lack sincerity, he would be considered base. Such sincerity is what the gentleman cleaves to and what 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 direct. Having become direct, his conduct will become self-reflecting. Being self-reflecting 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.

For a fuller discussion of the notion of *cheng*, coupled with the notion of *shen qi du*, one can turn to the "Daxue" 大學 (Great learning), the famous passage that defines the notion of *cheng qi yi* 誠其意 "making the will sincere":

所謂誠其意者，毋自欺也，如惡惡臭，如好好色，此之謂自謙。<sup>34</sup> 故君子必慎其獨也。小人閒居為不善，無所不至；見君子而后厭<sup>35</sup>然，揜其不善，而著其善。人之視己，如見其肺肝，然則何益矣？此謂誠於中，形於外。故

34. Reading *qian* 謙 as *qie* 慊 "to be satisfied," following Zheng Xuan.

35. Reading *yan* 厭 as *yan* 廕, which Zheng Xuan glosses as *bicang mao* 閉藏貌 "the appearance of being closed off and concealed."

君子必慎其獨也。曾子曰：「十目所視，十手所指，其嚴乎？」富潤屋，德潤身，心廣體胖。故君子必誠其意。<sup>36</sup>

What is meant by “making the will sincere” is allowing no self-deception, as when one hates a bad smell or loves a beautiful color. This is called satisfying oneself. Therefore the gentleman is watchful over himself when alone. When the petty man lives in leisure, there is no limit to where he does not go in his bad deeds. Upon seeing a gentleman, he becomes elusive, concealing the bad and showing off the good in him. But what is the use, indeed? For other people see him as if they see his lungs and liver. This is what is meant by saying that being sincere in one’s mind will be shown in one’s outward appearance. Therefore the gentleman will always be watchful over himself when alone. Zengzi said: “What ten eyes are beholding and what ten hands are pointing to—isn’t it stern?” Wealth makes a house shining and virtue makes a person shining. When one’s mind is generous, his body becomes big. Therefore the gentleman always makes his will sincere.<sup>37</sup>

As in the “Jie bi” and the other texts considered above, the “Daxue” describes a situation in which a person is alone, and in the injunction, *junzi shen qi du* “the gentleman is watchful over himself when alone,” it contrasts the behavior of the gentleman with that of the petty person.<sup>38</sup> When the “Daxue” defines *ziqie* 自謙 “satisfying oneself” with the phrase: 如惡惡臭，如好好色 “as when one hates a bad smell or loves a beautiful color,” this resembles the description from the “Jie bi”: 縱其欲，兼其情 “to follow one’s desires and fulfill his feelings.” In both cases, an ideal state is defined as the satisfaction of one’s instinctual needs. As for its discussion of *shen qi du*, the “Daxue” subsumes this under the topic of *cheng qi yi* “making the will sincere,” and here the parallel of the two phrases is noteworthy. Seen in this light, it is not surprising that the “Daxue,” like the “Jie bi,” uses the expression *xianju* 閑居 to denote the situation in which a person is alone.<sup>39</sup> It is remarkable that the two passages share the same pejorative usage of this expression:

36. Li Xueqin, ed., *Liji zhengyi*, 1859–66.

37. The translation has consulted Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), 89–90.

38. Like the “Daxue,” a passage in *Xinyu* 新語 “Si wu” 思務 contrasts the gentleman and the petty person’s behavior when each is alone: 君子行之於幽閒，小人厲之於士眾 “The gentleman puts himself to action in seclusion, and the petty person is made competent by the multitude”; see Wang Liqi 王利器, *Xinyu jiaozhu* 新語校注 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1986), 167–70. What this suggests is once again that the gentleman acts properly even when he is alone, whereas the petty person, not to be trusted, must be trained and taught by being placed among other men.

39. Note that the expression is written as *xianju* 閑居 in the “Jie bi.”

the *xiaoren* 小人 “petty person” of the “Daxue” could just as well be the man living in a stone cave that Xunzi looks at somewhat wryly. All of this points to the close relation between the “Daxue” and “Jie bi,” made explicit by the “Bugou,” and this shows how an interpretation of the “Daxue” could benefit from a reading of those two texts from Xunzi.

Finally, before moving on to the next section, it is possible to consider one more text relevant to the discussion above, from *Huainanzi* 淮南子 “Xiu wu” 脩務 (Cultivating effort).<sup>40</sup> In this passage, the discussion complains that people are now unable to *xianju jing si* 閒居靜思 “live apart and ponder quietly,” a phrase almost exactly the same as what one finds in the “Jie bi.” This is contrasted with the sages of the past, described in the following terms: 超然獨立，卓然離世 “splendidly, they stand alone; loftily, they leave the world,” in which the expression *du li* 獨立 “to stand alone” is reminiscent of the notion of *shen qi du*. The passage then turns to the importance of diligence, and in so doing uses the expression *zhiqiang* 自彊 “to have strength of will,” which, as one recalls, also appears in Xunzi’s criticism of Mencius in the same passage from the “Jie bi.” As the “Xiu wu” puts it: 自人君公卿至於庶人，不自彊而功成者，天下未之有也 “From the rulers and ministers on down to the common people, the world has never had a case of someone succeeding without having strength of will.” All of this suggests a close connection between the “Jie bi” and “Xiu wu,” though given that the former refers to such keywords as *xianju* and *zhiqiang* in a negative manner, whereas the latter speaks favorably of them, it is possible that the “Xiu wu” is an attempt to defend Zisi, perhaps even a direct representation of the teachings of that figure.<sup>41</sup>

40. He Ning 何寧, *Huainanzi jishi* 淮南子集釋 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1998), 1344–47, and the translation in John S. Major, Sarah A. Queen, Andrew Seth Meyer, and Harold D. Roth, *Huainanzi: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Government in Early Han China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 779–80, which I have consulted.

41. For another example where *xianju* has a positive connotation, see *Huainanzi* “Quanyan” 詮言, which, in speaking of the unexpected but also inevitable nature of fortune and misfortune, suggests the following: 故閒居而樂，無為而治 “Thus, he is joyful living apart and governs through non-action”; see He Ning 何寧, *Huainanzi jishi* 1001–4, and the translation in John S. Major, et al., *Huainanzi: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Government in Early Han China* 545, which I have consulted. Here the juxtaposition of *xianju* and *wuwei* “no action” resembles the “Jie bi,” though of course the “Jie bi” is different in its acceptance of only the latter and not the former. A parallel to the “Quanyan” passage can be found in *Wenzi* 文子 “Fuyan” 符言; see Wang Liqi 王利器, *Wenzi shuyi* 文子疏義 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 2000), 184–85.

This last point can be shown by comparing a descriptive phrase about the sage from the “Xiu wu” with a close parallel of the text in *Shuoyuan* “Jian ben”:

《脩務》：砥礪其才，自試神明 ...

They polish and grind their talents, so they would be tested by the spirits.

《建本》：今人誠能砥礪其材，自誠其神明 ...

If the people of the present can truly polish and grind their talents and make sincere their spirits.<sup>42</sup>

Although several commentators suggest that the “Xiu wu” should be emended on the basis of the “Jian ben,” I believe the “Xiu wu,” which reads coherently as it is (note the correspondence between *dili* 砥礪 “to polish and grind” and *shi* 試 “to test”), actually contains the earlier version of the text. It is only by a later time, with the growing prominence of the notion of *cheng*, that the text was rewritten to give *cheng* instead of *shi*. In fact, the “Jian ben” goes on to identify the “Zhongyong” and quote a passage found in that text, another indication of its late origin. If this understanding is correct, then it establishes a relative sequence between the “Xiu wu” and the “Jian ben,” and this can be interpreted in a way that is consistent with the analysis above, which shows that the notion of *cheng*, not seen in the “Wuxing,” only enters into the discussion of *shen qi du* with the “Bugou” and the “Daxue.” In turn, this would suggest that the “Xiu wu” has preserved information unadulterated by later developments, and is for that reason worthy of further study.

Through an analysis of the “Jie bi” and “Bugou” as well as comparisons with other texts from the Early Chinese literary record, the discussion in the first two sections argues that the notion of *shen qi du* “to be watchful over oneself when alone,” first seen in the newly excavated “Wuxing,” is what underlies Xunzi’s discussion in those two texts. In both places, Xunzi demonstrates a familiarity with the notion, and he can be seen incorporating that notion, even the language used to discuss it in the “Wuxing,” into his own teachings. This is done for the purpose of advocating an ideal different from what is suggested in the “Wuxing”; namely, a state of freedom, attained only after a long and gradual process, in which one’s actions are effortless and unrestrained.

42. Zuo Songchao, *Shuoyuan jizheng*, 161–67. This is a different passage from the one considered earlier in this study, though my interpretations of the two are consistent with one another. In both cases, my understanding is that the teaching of Zisi or the description of one’s solitude in the “Jian ben” is at some distance from materials closer or more favorable to Zisi.

## 2. The "Fei shier zi" (Contra twelve masters)

In discussing Xunzi's 荀子 criticism of Zisi 子思, it is impossible not to mention the "Fei shier zi" 非十二子 (Contra twelve masters), Xunzi's sweeping criticism of twelve contemporary thinkers. Two of Xunzi's targets are Zisi and Mencius; in particular, Xunzi singles out a teaching associated with them called *wuxing* 五行 "the five conducts," denouncing it in terms that, while clearly hostile and critical, have become somewhat difficult to understand. As mentioned in the introduction, it is this aspect of the criticism that has received the most attention among recent studies of the "Fei shier zi."<sup>43</sup> Although such attention is not necessarily unwarranted, it does, in my opinion, shift the focus away from the main purpose of Xunzi's remarks, hence obscuring the nature of his disagreement with Zisi and Mencius. In the analysis below, my approach will be to try to understand Xunzi in his own terms, to restore the internal logic of the "Fei shier zi," and finally to reflect on the place of Zisi and Mencius in Xunzi's account.

The organization of my discussion is as follows: I will begin by considering in some detail a passage from Xunzi's "Ruxiao" 儒效 (The teachings of the *Ru*), which has a vocabulary similar to the "Fei shier zi," and which reviews the different scholarly types with which Zisi

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43. These include Long Yuchun 龍宇純, "Xun Qing fei Si Meng wuxing shuo Yang zhu shuzheng" 荀卿非思孟五行說楊注疏證, in *Xunzi lunji* 荀子論集 (Taipei: Xuesheng, 1987), 87–102; Yang Rubin 楊儒賓, "De zhi xing yu de zhi qi—boshu 'Wuxing pian,' 'Desheng pian' lun daode, xinxing yu xingti de guanlian" 德之行與德之氣——帛書《五行篇》、《德聖篇》論道德、心性與形體的關聯, in *Rujia shenti guan* 儒家身體觀 (Taipei: Zhongyang yanjiu yuan Zhongguo wenzhe yanjiu suo, 1996), 253–92; Pang Pu 龐樸, *Zhubo Wuxing pian jiaozhu ji yanjiu* 竹帛五行篇校注及研究 (Taipei: Wanjuan lou, 2000); Paul Rakita Goldin, "Xunzi in the Light of the Guodian Manuscripts," *Early China* 25 (2000), 133–36; Ding Sixin 丁四新, *Guodian Chumu zhujian sixiang yanjiu* 郭店楚墓竹簡思想研究 (Beijing: Dongfang, 2000), 160–68; Wang Bo 王博, *Jianbo sixiang yanjiu lunji* 簡帛思想研究論集 (Taipei: Taiwan guji, 2001), 51–57, 59–71, 131–49; Liao Mingchun 廖明春, "Si Meng wuxing shuo xinjie" 思孟五行說新解, in *Zhongguo xueshu shi xinzheng* 中國學術史新證 (Chengdu: Sichuan daxue, 2005), 407–25; Xing Wen 邢文, "Boshu Zhouyi zhuanwen suo jian wuxing shuo" 帛書周易傳文所見五行說, in *Zhu hu zhubo: Zhongguo gudai sixiang yu xuepai* 著乎竹帛：中國古代思想與學派 (Taipei: Lantai, 2005), 370–409; Wei Qipeng 魏啓鵬, *Jianbo wenxian "Wuxing" jianzheng* 簡帛文獻《五行》箋證 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 2005), 151–61; Guo Qiyong 郭齊勇, "Zailun 'Wuxing' yu 'sheng zhi'" 再論《五行》與「聖智」, in *Zhongguo zhexue zhihui de tansuo* 中國哲學智慧的探索 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 2008), 67–78; Guo Lihua 郭梨華, *Chutu wenxian yu Xian Qin Ru Dao zhexue* 出土文獻與先秦儒道哲學 (Taipei: Wanjuan lou, 2008), 213–40, 241–57; Tao Lei 陶磊, *Si Meng zhijian Ruxue yu zaoqi Yixue shi xintan* 思孟之間儒學與早期易學史新探 (Tianjin: Tianjin guji, 2009), 76–103; and Li Rui 李銳, "Ren yi li zhi sheng wuxing de sixiang yuanyuan" 仁義禮智聖五行的思想淵源, in *Xinchu jianbo de xueshu tansuo* 新出簡帛的學術探索 (Beijing: Beijing shifan daxue, 2010), 157–72.

and Mencius can be associated. This, I believe, will illuminate several important features of the “Fei shier zi.” Following a line-by-line reading of the “Fei shier zi,” the discussion will end by reflecting on this text and the “Jie bi” as a whole.

To begin with the “Ruxiao,” a discussion that, apart from a brief reference to the *suren* 俗人 “vulgar people,” distinguishes among three different types of scholar: the *suru* 俗儒 “vulgar scholars,” *yaru* 雅儒 “cultivated scholars,” and *daru* 大儒 “great scholars.” These discussions are translated in full below.<sup>44</sup>

有不學問，無正義，以富利為隆，是俗人者也。

Those who have no learning, lack righteousness, and consider wealth and material gain as exalted are the vulgar people.

逢衣淺帶，解果其冠，略法先王而足亂世術；繆學雜舉，不知法後王而一制度，不知隆禮義而殺《詩》、《書》；其衣冠行偽已同於世俗矣，然而不知惡者；其言議談說已無以異於墨子矣，然而明不能分別；呼先王以欺愚者而求衣食焉，得委積足以揜其口，則揚揚如也；隨其長子，事其便辟，舉其上客，惏然若終身之虜而不敢有他志，是俗儒者也。

They wear large-sleeved robes with a narrow sash, and they raise their caps ever so high. They follow the model of the ancient kings only in a general way, though enough to bring disorder to the age. Promoting a mix of both mistakes and learning, they do not realize that they should model themselves on the later kings and unify the rules and regulations, and they do not know to exalt the rites and moral principles and give less importance to the *Odes* and *Documents*. Their style and conduct have indeed become the same as the vulgar ones of the world, but they do not know the badness of it. Their words and speech have indeed become indistinguishable from Mozi's, but their intelligence cannot tell them apart. They invoke the ancient kings to cheat the stupid and seek a living from them. If they accumulate stores sufficient to keep their mouths filled, they are elated. They follow along after the prince, serving as his attendants and joining<sup>45</sup> with his top guests, so anxious that they are like captives for life and dare not hold an alternative purpose. Such are the vulgar scholars.

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44. Wang Xianqian 王先謙, Kubo Ai 久保愛, Ikai Hikohiro 猪飼彦博, and Hattori Unokichi 服部宇之吉, *Junshi* 荀子 (Kanbun taikai 漢文大系, vol. 15; Tōkyō: Fuzanbō, 1913), 4.26–33. The translation has consulted John Knoblock, *Xunzi: A Translation and Study of the Complete Works* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988–94), vol. 2, 78–80. See also a close parallel to this passage in Xu Weiyu 許維通, *Hanshi waizhuan jishi* 韓詩外傳集釋 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1980), *juan* 5.170–74.

45. Reading *ju* 舉 as *yu* 與, following Wang Niansun 王念孫.

法後王，一制度，隆禮義而殺《詩》、《書》；其言行已有大法矣，然而明不能齊法教之所不及；聞見之所未至，則知不能類也；知之曰知之，不知曰不知，內不自以誣，外不自以欺，以是尊賢畏法，而不敢怠傲，是雅儒者也。

They model themselves after the later kings, unify rules and regulations, exalt the rites and moral principles, and give less importance to the *Odes* and *Documents*. Their words and conduct have already incorporated the great model. Nonetheless their intelligence cannot bring to uniformity where model and instruction do not reach. Where their study and experience have not yet arrived, their knowledge cannot properly imitate. When they know something, they say that they know; and when they do not know it, they say that they do not. Within they do not delude themselves. Without they do not deceive others. Because of this they honor the worthy, stand in awe of the model, and do not presume to be either lax or overbearing. Such are the cultivated scholars.

法先王，統禮義，一制度，以淺持博，以古持今，以一持萬；苟仁義之類也，雖在鳥獸之中，若別白黑；倚物怪變，所未嘗聞也，所未嘗見也，卒然起一方，則舉統類而應之，無所僂患；張法而度之，則嗒然若合符節，是大儒者也。

They model themselves after the former kings, direct the rites and moral principles, and unify the rules and regulations. They use the shallow to handle the extensive, the ancient to handle the present, the one to handle the myriad. Even if the likes of benevolence and righteousness were found in the midst of birds and wild beasts, they can be distinguished like black and white. As for extraordinary things and bizarre transformations, those that have never been seen or heard of before, if they brusquely rise up in one corner, they are able to identify the guiding principle and proper category and respond to them without cause for hesitation or embarrassment. When they extend the model to measure them, everything is perfectly<sup>46</sup> covered as though the two halves of a tally were being joined together. Such are the great scholars.

In its discussion of the three different types of scholar, the “Ruxiao” makes an important distinction between *fa xianwang* 法先王 “to model after the former kings” and *fa houwang* 法後王 “to model after the latter kings.”<sup>47</sup> The difference is based on their relative distance from

46. Reading *an* 嗒 as *yan* 夤, following Wang Yinzi 王引之.

47. Interestingly, in the parallel of this passage in the *Hanshi waizhuan*, only the *xianwang* are mentioned, not the *houwang*. This does away with a distinction that might have been regarded as somewhat abstruse outside of Xunzi, but it has the effect of obscuring the difference between the *yanru* “cultivated scholars” and *daru* “great scholars” that is so clearly laid out by Xunzi.



the present: the *xianwang* are more distant in time than the *houwang*. Although all of these ancient rulers are worth emulating, the *houwang* are a better model because more information about them has been preserved in the literary records, and one stands a greater chance, when following them, to understand the ancient institutions and the single principle of *liyi* 禮義 “the rites and moral principles” underlying them. To put this in a different way, the literary records or the classics of the *Odes* and *Documents* are never meant to be studied for their own sake; they are the instruments by which one approaches the ancient rulers, first the *houwang* who are close in time and ultimately the *xianwang* of the distant past.<sup>48</sup>

In this way, when considering Xunzi’s criticism against the *suru* “vulgar scholars,” one finds that they have been targeted precisely because they emulate only the *xianwang* (and even then “in a general way,” or *lue* 略) without knowing about the *houwang*. The result is that they do not grasp the significance of the institutions of the ancient rulers, or *yi zhidu* 一制度 “unify the rules and regulations,” and they do not uphold the principle of *liyi* underlying the classics, or *long yiyue er shai Shi Shu* 隆禮義而殺《詩》、《書》 “exalt the rites and moral principles, and give less importance to the *Odes* and *Documents*.” Compared to the *suru*, the *jaru* “cultivated scholars” have no such shortcomings, and even better still are the *daru* “great scholars.” When the “Ruxiao” says that the *daru* follow the former kings, the suggestion is not that these scholars are like the *suru* in emulating only those ancient figures, but rather that the *daru* are able to see beyond the ancient rulers who are close in time (thus surpassing the *jaru*) and ultimately embody the ancient rulers of the distant past.

In its comparison of the *jaru* and *daru*, the “Ruxiao” introduces an important term, *lei* 類 “proper category,” defined by one scholar as “the extended applications by analogy of the models contained in the *Rituals* to categories not expressly covered by the models themselves.”<sup>49</sup> This can be seen in the discussion of the *jaru*: 其言行已有大法矣，然而明不能齊法教之所不及；聞見之所未至，則知不能類也 “Their words and conduct have already incorporated the great model. Nonetheless their intelligence cannot bring to uniformity where model and instruction do not reach. Where their study and experience have not yet arrived, their knowledge cannot properly imitate.” That is to say, although the *jaru* are themselves proper in their conduct, they cannot

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48. For the “Ruxiao” to emphasize the importance of the classics, but to suggest that one should not depend on them, this has to do with Xunzi’s response to criticisms of the classics during his time, which is a topic that calls for a separate treatment.

49. Knoblock, *Xunzi: A Translation and Study of the Complete Works*, vol. 1, 252.



extend this as a category to those things lying beyond their immediate reach. It is only in the *daru* that this ideal is realized. According to this discussion, it is possible for the *daru* to recognize *renyi zhi lei* 仁義之類 “the likes of benevolence and righteousness” among the uncultivated and uncivilized, because they have in themselves the correct model of *ren* 仁 “benevolence” and *yi* 義 “righteousness” and are able to apply that to all things. This is what is meant by the phrase: 舉統類而應之 “to respond by identifying the guiding principle and proper category,” and the contrast between oneself and others, proper category and all things is consistent with the emphasis on a single principle of *liyi* and the unifying of the institutions, seen throughout the “Ruxiao” passage.

With the “Ruxiao” in place, it is possible to turn to Xunzi’s criticism of Zisi and Mencius in the “Fei shier zi”:

略法先王而不知其統，猶然而材劇志大，聞見雜博。案往舊造說，謂之五行，甚僻違而無類，幽隱而無說，閉約而無解。案飾其辭而祇敬之曰：此真先君子之言也。子思唱之，孟軻和之，世俗之溝猶脊儒，嚙嚙然不知其所非也，遂受而傳之，以為仲尼，子游為茲厚於後世，是則子思，孟軻之罪也。<sup>50</sup>

Some men model themselves after the ancient kings in a general way, but they do not understand the guiding principle. Being at ease<sup>51</sup> with themselves, their abilities are manifold, their ambition great, and their experience and knowledge both varied and broad. They have initiated a theory based on the times past, calling it the “Five Conducts.” Perverse in the extreme, it lacks proper categories. Mysterious and restricted, it is not accompanied by any explanation. To give their propositions a cloak of respectability and to win respect and veneration for them, they say that these doctrines represent the genuine words of the preceding gentleman. Zisi provided the tune, and Mencius harmonized. The deluded scholars of the world clamor along, unaware that this is wrong, and they pass on what they have received, believing that, on account of this, Confucius and Ziyou would be highly esteemed by later generations. This was the crime of Zisi and Mencius.

50. Wang Xianqian, et al., *Junshi*, 3.26–28. The translation has consulted Knoblock, *Xunzi: A Translation and Study of the Complete Works*, vol. 1, 224. Note that in the parallel to this passage in the *Hanshi waizhuan*, the remarks about Zisi and Mencius are nowhere to be found. This has led some scholars to suggest that perhaps those remarks were interpolated into the “Fei shier zi,” though I believe this only shows that the *Hanshi waizhuan* is more sympathetic towards Zisi and Mencius.

51. For the suggestion that *youran* 猶然 means “at ease,” see Long Yuchun, “Du Xun Qingzi san ji” 讀荀卿子三記, in idem, *Xunzi lunji*, 243–44.

It is immediately apparent that the “Fei shier zi” passage shares many features with the “Ruxiao,” especially the latter’s discussion of the *suru*. Just as Zisi and Mencius are criticized for their wide and unfocused learning, or *wenjian zabo* 聞見雜博 “their experience and knowledge are varied and broad,” Xunzi chastises the *suru* for *miuxue zaju* 繆學雜舉 “promoting a mix of mistakes and learning.” Just as the “Ruxiao” repeatedly emphasizes the importance of *yi zhidu* “unifying the rules and regulations” and *tong liyi* 統禮義 “directing the rites and moral principles” (or *long liyi* “exalting the rites and moral principles”), the “Fei shier zi” faults Zisi and Mencius for *bu zhi qi tong* 不知其統 “not understanding the single guiding principle.”<sup>52</sup> It is for this reason that Zisi and Mencius are like the *suru* in being criticized for *luefa xianwang* 略法先王 “modeling themselves after the ancient kings in a general way.” Although they appear to follow the ancient rulers, they lack any understanding of the basic purpose behind this endeavor.<sup>53</sup>

Here, while pointing out the similarities between the “Ruxiao” and “Fei shier zi,” I hasten to add that I do not intend to simply equate the two. Since what one finds in the “Ruxiao” is discussion of several groups of scholars, it is not necessary that all of Xunzi’s comments—useful as they are for understanding his criteria for assessing others—should apply to individual figures such as Zisi and Mencius. The “Fei shier zi” should be read for what it says as well as *what it does not say*. Thus, while Xunzi dislikes Zisi and Mencius’ emulation of the ancient rulers, he says nothing about their views towards the later kings (as one might expect after reading the “Ruxiao”). This must be for a reason. In the same way, while Xunzi suggests that the two lack a

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52. For further support of this, one can turn to the description of Confucius and Zigong 子弓, later in the “Fei shier zi,” which uses the phrase: 總方略·齊言行·壹統類 “to combine specific methods with general strategies, to make what one says equal to what one does, and to unite the guiding principle with the proper category”; see Wang Xianqian, et al., *Junshi*, 3.28, and the translation from Knoblock, *Xunzi: A Translation and Study of the Complete Works*, vol. 1, 225, on which my translation is based. Here the expression *tonglei* 統類 “the guiding principle and proper category” is the same as what is given in the “Ruxiao” and is a reminder of what Zisi and Mencius do not possess.

53. The importance of such terms as *tong* and *lei* is also noted by Li Jinglin 李景林 in “Guanyu Si Meng xuepai de wenti” 關於思孟學派的問題, in *Jiaoyang de benyuan: zhexue tupo qi de Rujia xinxing lun* 教養的本原：哲學突破期的儒家心性論 (2nd edition; Beijing: Beijing shifan daxue, 2009), 110–23. Li comments insightfully that the target of Xunzi’s criticism is Zisi and Mencius’ view on the relation between heaven and the humans. This, though different from what I propose below, is helpful for understanding the general difference between Xunzi and Zisi-Mencius. Cf. also Mark Csikszentmihalyi, *Material Virtue: Ethics and the Body in Early China* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 86–100. Both Csikszentmihalyi and Li cite the “Ruxiao” to shed light on the “Fei shier zi.”

single guiding principle and are too unfocused in their learning, he makes no mention of *long liyue*, *shai Shi Shu* "exalting the rites and moral principles and giving less importance to the *Odes* and *Documents*." This, too, is not unintentional. Although there is the possibility that such criticisms are already implicit in Xunzi's comment, I believe Xunzi is careful in his choice of words, and I believe this understanding is critical to account for the evidence from the "Wuxing," which I will turn to momentarily.<sup>54</sup>

To return to the "Fei shier zi," Xunzi goes on in his criticism of Zisi and Mencius to comment on the teaching of the *wuxing*: 案往舊造說，謂之五行，甚僻違而無類，幽隱而無說，閉約而無解 "They have initiated a theory based on the times past, calling it the 'Five Conducts.' Perverse in the extreme, it lacks proper categories. Mysterious and restricted, it is not accompanied by any explanation." Here, with the phrase *an wangjiu zao shuo* 案往舊造說 "to initiate a theory based on the times past," Xunzi is making a point similar to his earlier suggestion about Zisi and Mencius following the ancient rulers only in a general way: although there might be some basis to their claims, something more fundamental is missing. The reason lies in the next part of Xunzi's criticism, in the phrase: 甚僻違而無類 "Perverse in the extreme, it lacks proper categories." Here the term *lei* "proper category" clearly echoes *tong* "the guiding principle" from above and *tonglei* from the "Ruxiao," and its lack is directly linked with *piwei* 僻違 "perverse," an expression that describes arrogance, obstinacy, and the inappropriate behaviors resulting from such attitudes.<sup>55</sup> This discussion is followed by

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54. To anticipate my discussion of the "Wuxing" later on, I believe that in his criticism of Zisi and Mencius, Xunzi refrains from challenging the figures to *fa houwang* "modeling themselves after the latter kings," because the "Wuxing" already contains reference to King Wen of the Western Zhou, one of the "latter kings" for Xunzi. In the same way, the phrase *long liyi* "exalting the rites and moral principles" does not figure in Xunzi's criticism of the two figures, likely because the "Wuxing" in its discussion of *ren*, *yi*, *li*, *zhi*, and *sheng*, already "exalts *li* and *yi*." Of course, the "Wuxing" discusses the *li* and *yi* in a different framework than Xunzi, and this is perhaps what Xunzi is critical of. Finally, Xunzi does not fault the two figures for not "giving lesser importance to the *Odes* and *Documents*," or *shai Shi Shu*. The "Wuxing" is never explicit in how it regards the classics (even though it quotes from one of them a number of times), but if the "Xing zi ming chu" 性自命出 from Guodian is any indication, then its position might be that the classics should not be valued for their own sake, but for what they say and the actual persons they represent. Such a view would have been agreeable to Xunzi.

55. For other occurrences of the expression *piwei* in Xunzi (also written as *biwei* 僻違 and *bihui* 僻回), see Wang Xianqian, et al., *Junshi*, 1.23–26, 1.30–32, 2.4, and 18.12–13. The translation of "perverse" is based on Wang Niansun's gloss of *xie* 邪, literally "crooked," under the second of these passages.

two phrases that parallel each other in referring to the obscurity of verbal expression: 幽隱而無說，閉約而無解 “Mysterious and restricted, it is not accompanied by any explanation.” But what exactly do they mean?

There is some evidence that the expression *youyin* 幽隱 “mysterious” can be used to describe a situation in which a person is alone. One example is the following passage from *Xunzi* “Wangba” 王霸 (Of kings and hegemonies):

治國者，分已定，則主相、臣下、百吏各謹其所聞，不務聽其所不聞；各謹其所見，不務視其所不見。所聞所見，誠以齊矣，則雖幽閒隱辟，百姓莫敢不敬分安制，以化其上，是治國之徵也。<sup>56</sup>

In a well-ordered country, where class distinctions have been fixed, from the ruler to the prime minister to the ministers down to the hundred officials, each person will pay attention only to his official duties and will not strive to adjudicate what is not part of his duties. Each person will pay attention only to what is within the purview of his office and will not strive to oversee what lies outside it. If what is heard is part of his duties and what lies within the purview of his office is employed genuinely in a uniform and exact manner, then, however secluded and out of the way they might be, not one of the hundred clans will presume not to take strict care in performing the obligations of their class and be at ease with the regulations of government, thereby transforming themselves to accord with their superiors. Such are the distinguishing characteristics of a well-ordered country.

In the ideal political order described by *Xunzi*, each person adheres to his or her role and the duties demanded from such a role. Even when alone, or *youxian yinbi* 幽閒隱辟 “secluded and out of the way,” a more elaborate form of *youyin*, the expectation is that one would still maintain a sense of caution in one’s responsibilities.<sup>57</sup> Along the same lines, it is possible to consider the following statement from *Han Feizi* 韓非子 “Liu fan” 六反 (The six counter-facts): 夫陳輕貨於幽隱，雖曾、史可疑也 “When portable valuables are displayed in secluded places, even Zeng and Shi are open to suspicion.” Here the expression

56. Wang Xianqian, et al., *Junshi*, 7.28–29. The translation has consulted Knoblock, *Xunzi: A Translation and Study of the Complete Works*, vol. 2, 165.

57. Here one might note an authoritarian strand in *Xunzi*’s discussion and perhaps the notion of *shen qi du* more generally, but I should point out that this is one of the rare instances I have encountered in which the suggestion to watch over oneself when alone is made *not* to a person in a position of power, but to someone in a low position. In most of the early discussions of the notion of *shen qi du*, the concern is with morality; that is, a person has only heaven or his own conscience to answer to, not his superiors.

*yuyin* "secluded" is exactly what one finds in the "Fei shier zi," and once again, its usage describes a situation in which, under no one's watch, even Zengzi 曾子 and Shi You 史鱗, moral paragons for the followers of Confucius, may succumb to the temptation for material gain.<sup>58</sup>

With the expression *biyue* 閉約 "restricted," *bi* 閉 and *yue* 約 can both describe something that is sealed off or inaccessible to others, literally "shut off" and "bound," respectively,<sup>59</sup> but they can also refer to a situation in which a person is neglected by others. As seen in the famous statement by Confucius in *Lun yu* 論語 (The Analects) 4.2: 不仁者不可以久處約，不可以長處樂 "One who is not benevolent cannot remain long in straitened circumstances, nor can he remain long in easy circumstances," *yue* can refer to a situation that is less than ideal, "straitened circumstances," when a person undergoes a test of character.<sup>60</sup> Like the petty person of the "Daxue" that I have mentioned (and Zengzi and Shi You in Han Feizi's cynical eyes), the *buren zhe* 不仁者 "one who is not benevolent" cannot be trusted in this situation, since he lacks, among other things, a sense of propriety and righteousness that will ensure the correctness of his conduct regardless of the circumstances.

Finally, it is noteworthy that there is the expression *yinyue* 隱約, also used to denote straitened circumstances, as can be seen in various examples in the literary record.<sup>61</sup> This is comparable to the juxtaposition of the terms *you* 幽 and *yue* 約 in the following statement from *Shuoyuan* 說苑 (Garden of sayings) "Zayan" 雜言 (Miscellaneous words), attributed to

58. Chen Qiyou 陳奇猷, *Han Feizi xin jiaozhu* 韓非子新校注 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji, 2000), 1008–9. See also *Han Feizi* 韓非子 "Nan san" 難三, where one finds a similar distrust of Zengzi and Shi You: 廣廷嚴居，眾人之所肅也；晏室獨處，曾、史之所慢也 "Situated sternly in an open court, that is where everyone is solemn; residing by oneself in a room of pleasure, that is where Zeng and Shi are disrespectful"; see Chen Qiyou, *Han Feizi xin jiaozhu*, 921–22.

59. Cf. Long Yuchun's discussion in "Du Xun Qingzi zhaji" 讀荀子札記, in *Xunzi lunji*, 185. The close connection between *bi* and *yue* can be seen in a passage from the *Laozi* 老子, chapter 27: 善閉者無闕楗而不可開，善結者無繩約而不可解 "One who excels in shutting uses no bolt yet what he has shut cannot be opened; one who excels in tying uses no cord yet what he has tied cannot be undone"; see Shima Kunio 島邦男, *Rōshi kōsei* 老子校正 (Tōkyō: Kyūko shoin, 1973), and the translation from D.C. Lau, *Tao Te Ching* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1989). It is also possible to note the term *yan* 厭 in the above-mentioned discussion of the petty person in the "Daxue": 見君子而后厭然，揜其不善，而著其善 "Upon seeing a gentleman, he becomes elusive, concealing the bad and showing off the good in him." *Yan* is read *yan* 厭 by the commentator Zheng Xuan and glossed as *bicang mao* 閉藏貌 "the appearance of being closed off and concealed."

60. Cheng Shude, *Lun yu jishi*, 228–30. The translation is from Lau, *The Analects*.

61. See the list of examples and analysis in Jiang Lihong 蔣禮鴻, *Yifu xudiao* 義府續貂, in *Jiang Lihong ji* 蔣禮鴻集 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang jiaoyu, 2001), vol. 2, 169–70.

Confucius during his sojourns among the states: 故居不幽則思不遠，身不約則智不廣，庸知而不遇之 “Thus if one does not live in a secluded place, his thought would not go far; if one is not himself in distress, his knowledge would not be broad; how do you know his time will not come?”<sup>62</sup> This attests to the overlap in meaning between *youyin* and *biyue*. In sum, whether it is a situation in which one is alone or in straitened circumstances, these expressions all point to a person’s solitude, whether this solitude is behavioral or intellectual, whether one is physically alone or isolated from others in a relative sense, and whether this is self-inflicted because of one’s heightened sense of self-awareness, or caused by others because of their inability to recognize one’s worth. In fact, returning to the expression *piwei*, whether it is obstinate, arrogant, or “peculiar and unreasonable,”<sup>63</sup> perhaps *piwei* can also be seen as related to *youyin* and *biyue*. As one might already have noticed, in the “Wangba” expression, *youxian yinbi* 幽閒隱辟 “secluded and out of the way,” there is the word *bi* 辟 which corresponds to the expression *piwei*. In addition, from the “Chengxiang” 成相 (Working songs), one finds the following statement by Xunzi:

正直惡，心無度，邪枉辟回失道途；已無尤人，我獨自美豈<sup>64</sup> 無故？<sup>65</sup>

When the correct and upright are hated, when the hearts know no measure, the depraved and crooked, the perverse and corrupt, lose their way along the road. Although you do not find fault with others and consider that I myself alone am fine—how could you be without blame?

Here one finds *bihui* 辟回, an expression etymologically related with *piwei*, followed immediately by the phrase *wo duzi mei* 我獨自美 “to consider that I myself alone am fine.”

In sum, the examination of the semantic content of the expressions *piwei*, *youyin*, and *biyue* suggests that there are certain conceptual parallels among them, and these reflect Xunzi’s care in formulating his criticism against Zisi and Mencius as he ultimately chooses a diction that reflects the specific content of Zisi and Mencius’ teaching. In light of the “Jie bi,” “Bugou,” and other texts considered in the first section, this teaching must be the notion of *shen qi du* 慎其獨 “to be watchful over oneself when alone” that is expounded in the newly excavated

62. Zuo Songchao 左松超, *Shuoyuan jizheng* 說苑集證 (Taipei: Guoli bianyi guan, 2000), 1054.

63. This is Knoblock’s translation of *piwei*.

64. A second occurrence of the character *du* 獨 has been deleted, following the variant text noted by Yang Liang 楊涼.

65. Wang Xianqian, et al., *Junshi*, 18.12–13. The translation has consulted Knoblock, *Xunzi: A Translation and Study of the Complete Works*, vol. 3, 183.

"Wuxing." In Xunzi's view, both Zisi and Mencius have attempted to distinguish themselves from others in ways that can hardly be justified, hence their *wushuo* 無說 and *wujie* 無解 "lacking of any explanation." The fundamental reason behind this is that they do not have *tong* 統, *lei*, and the unifying principle of morality denoted by those terms.

The remainder of the "Fei shier zi" presents no special difficulty and follows from the previous statements. Because Zisi and Mencius are already at fault for lacking a single guiding principle, they cannot represent *xian junzi* 先君子 "the preceding gentleman," a reference to Zisi's pedigree and his failed inheritance of Confucius' legacy. The people now do not recognize Zisi and Mencius for who they really are, so they follow the two rather blindly: 以為仲尼，子游為茲厚於後世 "believing that, on account of this, Confucius and Ziyou would be highly esteemed by later generations."<sup>66</sup> This concludes the "Fei shier zi" discussion of Zisi and Mencius.

In my analysis of the "Fei shier zi," I have argued that the focus of Xunzi's criticism of Zisi and Mencius, in spite of the much-noted reference to the teaching of *wuxing* "the five conducts," is actually the notion of *shen qi du* "to be watchful over oneself when alone." This can be seen from a close reading of Xunzi's comments, which, though stated negatively and accompanied by little elaboration, nevertheless reflect Xunzi's familiarity with the notion of *shen qi du* and the language used to discuss it. The result is an understanding of the "Fei shier zi" that resembles the analysis of the "Jie bi," made in the previous section. There, as one recalls, Xunzi makes a number of critical remarks about Ji 伋 and Mencius, and the focus of this criticism, too, is on the two figures' concern with one's being alone, the notion of *shen qi du*, in other words. This makes it possible, in the end, to consider the "Jie bi" and "Fei shier zi" as a whole.

As pointed out above, what lies at the heart of Xunzi's criticism in the "Fei shier zi" is his view that Zisi and Mencius lack *tong* "the guiding principle" and *lei* "proper category," two terms that resonate with Xunzi's discussion in the "Ruxiao." There is some evidence that this criticism, or the emphasis on a guiding principle, is also behind Xunzi's remarks in the "Jie bi." As one recalls from the "Jie bi," Xunzi characterizes the conducts of Ji, Mencius, and Youzi with the keywords of *wei* 危 "anxiously keeping oneself on guard," *qiang* 彊 "strength of

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66. Here the mentioning of Ziyou 子遊 is dubious, because he is cast in a negative light elsewhere in the "Fei shier zi," and it is Zigong 子弓 that appears together with Confucius as paragons worthy of emulation. This leads some scholars to suggest that in the final sentence of the "Fei shier zi" passage, perhaps Ziyou is a mistake for Zigong.



will," and *ren* 忍 "endurance," respectively. These are contrasted with the term *wēi* 微 "subtlety," which Xunzi reserves for his *zhiren* 至人 "perfect man," as can be seen in the rhetorical question: 夫微者，至人也；至人也，何彊，何忍，何危？ "True subtlety is the quality of the perfect man; what need has the perfect man for strength of will, for endurance, or for anxiously keeping himself on guard?" Here the key of the distinction is between *wēi* 危 and *wēi* 微, which corresponds to an earlier part of the "Jie bi," and which can be considered in some detail.

In an earlier passage in the "Jie bi," Xunzi introduces for the first time the distinction between the two terms. This is accompanied by a quotation from a source that he identifies as the *Daojing* 道經 (The classic of the way). According to this passage:

昔者，舜之治天下也，不以事詔而萬物成。處一危之，其榮滿側；養一之微，榮矣而未知。故《道經》曰：「人心之危，道心之微」。「危」、「微」之幾，惟明君子而後能知之。<sup>67</sup>

In the past, when Shun put the world in order, he did not issue instructions about each task, yet the myriad things were brought to completion. Abide in unity, being anxiously on guard about it, and its flowering will fill every side. Nurture unity, being attentive to its subtlest manifestations, and its flowering will never be recognized. Thus, the *Classic of the Way* says: "The mind of the *humans* is anxiously on guard; the mind of the *way* is attentive to these subtle manifestations." Only the gentleman who has already become bright and clear is able to know the first hints of being anxiously on guard or of attentiveness to subtle manifestations.

As Xunzi suggests, both *wēi* 危 and *wēi* 微 are closely connected to the notion of *yi* — "one," a singleness of purpose. What distinguishes the two is that with *wēi* 危, while a person maintains this single purpose, his single-mindedness is ultimately overwhelmed by the large number of tasks and specializations of which he is "anxiously keeping himself on guard." With *wēi* 微, a person is able to raise himself above all this, and with his single-mindedness preside over, command, and dominate all others. Needless to say, it is *wēi* 微 that Xunzi prefers, as can be seen in his discussion of Shun and later on the *zhiren* "perfect man." Here the hierarchical contrast between one and many draws a parallel with the "Fei shier zi." Just as Zisi and Mencius of the "Fei shier zi" are faulted for not matching their diverse learning with the *tong* "guiding principle"

67. Wang Xianqian, et al., *Junshi*, 15.17–18; see also the close parallel in the "Dalue" 大略 on 19.23. The translation has consulted Knoblock, *Xunzi: A Translation and Study of the Complete Works*, vol. 3, 106–7.



or *lei* "proper category," the attention to many things stands in direct contra-distinction to the single purpose of the "Jie bi."

In the broader context of the "Jie bi," the discussion of *wēi* 危 and *wēi* 微 is related to Xunzi's view that *bi* 蔽 "doubt" is caused by one's limited view and hence the failure to see the larger picture.<sup>68</sup> The gentleman recognizes this problem and thus maintains a *heng* 衡 "balance" among the various perspectives.<sup>69</sup> Such "balance," identified by Xunzi as *dao* 道 "the way," is achieved by the mind's reaching a quiescent state, or in Xunzi's terms, *xu yi er jing* 虛壹而靜 "emptiness, unity, and stillness."

The emphasis on a single guiding principle can also account for the "Bugou," where in the discussion of the notion of *cheng* 誠 "sincerity," Xunzi suggests the following: 夫誠者，君子之所守也，而政事之本也，唯所居以其類至 "Such sincerity is what the gentleman cleaves to and what forms the foundation of his government, so that wherever he may dwell, those who are of his own kind will come to him." Here *lei* is reminiscent of the discussions in the "Fei shier zi" and "Ruxiao," and in the context of the "Bugou," *yi qi lei zhi* 以其類至 has a dual meaning: it is not only "those who are of his own kind will come to him," but also that one's "proper category" will enable one to reach out to others.<sup>70</sup> As suggested in the previous section, it is *cheng* that the "Bugou" places before the notion of *shen qi du* as the key to self-cultivation. This distinction can be seen as parallel to the "Jie bi" preference for *wēi* 微 over *wēi* 危 and its subsequent attempt to reject that latter notion.

In the end, it is possible to trace Xunzi's emphasis on unity and the single guiding principle back to the "Wuxing." In its discussion of the notion of *shen qi du*, the "Wuxing" suggests the following (s. 16): 能為罷（一），狀（然）句（後）能為君子；[君子] 認（慎）丌（其）蜀（獨）也 "Only after one is capable of unity is one capable of being a

68. Wang Xianqian, et al., *Junshi*, 15.1–30.

69. In its discussion of the notion of *heng* "balance," the "Jie bi" suggests the following: 無近無遠，無博無淺 "there is no close-at-hand and no distant, no extensive and no shallow," which clearly echoes the discussion of the *daru* "great scholars" in the "Ruxiao": 法先王，統禮義，一制度，以淺持博，以古持今，以一持萬 "They model themselves after the former kings, direct the rites and moral principles, and unify the rules and regulations. They use the shallow to handle the extensive, the ancient to handle the present, the one to handle the myriad."

70. Note that the term *lei* can also be found in the "Jie bi," as in the phrase *lei buke liang* 類不可兩 "there cannot be two proper categories"; see Wang Xianqian, et al., *Junshi*, 15.16.

gentleman; the gentleman is watchful over himself when alone."<sup>71</sup> In addition, when speaking of the five virtues of *ren* 仁 "benevolence," *yi* 義 "righteousness," *li* 禮 "rites," *zhi* 智 "wisdom," and *sheng* 聖 "sageliness," the "Wuxing" emphasizes their unity, as can be seen in the statement (ss. 4–6): 惠 (德) 之行五, 和胃 (謂) 之惠 (德) ... 不樂 (樂) 則亡 (無) 惠 (德) "The activities of virtue are five; their harmony is called virtue ... if there is no joy, then there is no virtue."<sup>72</sup> In light of the discussion above, it is clear that these discussions from the "Wuxing," with the reference to *yi* "unity" and *he* 和 "harmony," constitute the basis for Xunzi's discussion of *wēi* 危 and *wēi* 微. Just as Xunzi appropriates from the "Wuxing" its discussion of the notion of *shen qi du*, even its language, it takes over the concern with unity, single-mindedness, and a guiding principle and redefines it in his own terms. Interestingly, it is in the "commentary" of the "Wuxing" that one finds an effort to elaborate on the notion of unity much along the same lines as Xunzi's discussion of *wei* 微; but this is the subject of another study.<sup>73</sup>

Before ending this discussion, it is important to note that both the "Jie bi" and "Fei shier zi" contain a reference to Mencius. In my discussion of these two texts, I have found that it is possible and indeed plausible to present an interpretation solely on the basis of Zisi and the text closely related to that figure, the "Wuxing." For the "Fei shier zi," this has enabled me to connect the reference to Zisi's relation to Confucius, or his *xian junzi* "the preceding gentleman," with the emphasis placed on the teaching of *wuxing* "the five conducts" as well as the language used by Xunzi to discuss it, both of which can be traced back to the "Wuxing" rather than the work of Mencius. In the case of the "Jie bi," the focus on Ji or Zisi has allowed me to suggest that the notion of *shen qi du* is the common thread tying together the accounts about Ji and Mencius. It would appear that for both of these texts, Zisi is the main target of Xunzi's criticism, whereas Mencius has only a secondary

71. For this sentence, the Mawangdui text writes the following: 能為一, 然后能為君 = 子 = 慎其獨也. The ditto marks (=) have evidently been left out of the Guodian text and can be reconstructed on the basis of the Mawangdui text. Note that the "commentary" writes 苟 for the word *hou* 後. In both texts, this statement is made in connection with a quotation from the "Shijiu" 鳩鳴 of the *Book of Odes*.

72. The Mawangdui text writes the following: 德之行五, 和胃之德 ... 不樂則無德. In both places, the "Wuxing" is drawing a distinction between *de zhi xing* 德之行 "the activity of virtue" and *de* 德 "virtue." Whereas the former is the mere appearance of virtue, the latter refers to the internalization of *de*, accomplished through the unity of all five virtues, and thus is true virtue.

73. I take this up in my article, "'Liuti,' 'Liuxing' yu zaoqi Rujia sixiang de yige zhuanzhe," cited above, n. 15.

place. This does not mean that a more careful examination of Mencius' ideas would be irrelevant to understanding Xunzi's position and would thus not enrich my reading of the "Jie bi" and "Fei shier zi." But in my view, Mencius does not figure as prominently as Zisi in Xunzi's criticism, because in spite of Mencius' many innovations, his ideas remain consistent with Zisi and can be seen as operating within the general framework established by that figure.<sup>74</sup> This is the subject that concerns the precise content of the *wuxing* teaching, mentioned in the "Fei shier zi," which I will take up in a separate study.

### Some Conclusions

This study began with a consideration of the "Jie bi," attempting to show that underneath Xunzi's criticism of Ji, Mencius, and perhaps also Youzi is the rejection of the notion of *shen qi du* "to be watchful over oneself when alone"; and in fact Ji is another name for Zisi, Confucius' grandson. It is the notion of *shen qi du* that Xunzi engages with more directly in the "Bugou," and the discussion there argued that as much as Xunzi was aware of and perhaps even indebted to this notion, he tried to redefine it. These findings provided the background for the discussion in the second section of the study, which turned to the "Fei shier zi," and which likewise suggested that Xunzi's criticism of Zisi and Mencius in that passage revealed a concern with the notion of *shen qi du*. In the end, by considering the "Jie bi," "Fei shier zi," and "Bugou" as a whole, the study argued that the common thread tying together these texts is Xunzi's emphasis on a single guiding principle. Because in his view, neither Zisi nor Mencius grasped this principle, Xunzi denounced those two figures as well as the notion of *shen qi du* with which they were associated.

In noting the veiled ("Jie bi," "Fei shier zi") and explicit ("Bugou") references to the notion of *shen qi du* in Xunzi's writings, this study used as its basis the newly excavated "Wuxing," in which *shen qi du* occupies a central place. In the case of the "Fei shier zi," Zisi is directly identified and attributed a teaching called the *wuxing* "the five conducts," precisely what one finds in the "Wuxing." In the case of the "Jie bi," the study followed previous scholars in suggesting that the figure Ji is in fact another name for Zisi. What this means is that, at least by Xunzi's time, the notion of *shen qi du* as well as the "Wuxing" (or a version of that text) were both associated with Zisi. But perhaps this is stating the conclusion too cautiously. Given that the "Wuxing"

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74. Perhaps it is for the "Xing e" 性惡 that Xunzi reserves his direct engagement with Mencius' ideas.

was placed in the Guodian tomb together with the “Lu Mugong wen Zisi” and “Ziyi,” two other texts with strong ties to Zisi, suggesting that as early as the date of the Guodian tomb, the “Wuxing” was already closely associated with that figure—there should be no difficulty in going ahead and identifying Zisi as the figure behind the “Wuxing” and the notion of *shen qi du*.<sup>75</sup>

As for Xunzi, what this study revealed is that in his criticism of Zisi and Mencius, Xunzi never made his remarks without basis. Instead, as shown by the comparison with the “Wuxing” and other ancient texts, Xunzi was familiar with the notion of *shen qi du* and how it was discussed, and he likely had available to him a certain version of the “Wuxing.” The findings of this study, then, can be tested against Xunzi’s discussion of other figures besides Zisi and Mencius. Ultimately, the reconstruction of these discourses will lead to a more comprehensive evaluation of Early Chinese thought.

## 關於荀子如何評論子思的新研究

黃冠雲

### 摘要

本論文探討荀子在《解蔽》、《不苟》、《非十二子》等幾段文字中，針對孔子孫亦即子思所作的評論。通過新出土《五行》與上述幾段文字的對讀，本文指出，荀子不僅相當熟悉子思的學說，他甚至接觸過《五行》的文本。這樣的理解可以幫助我們評估荀子評論的忠實性與可靠性，同時提供線索重新想像從孔子到孟子、先秦思想史十分模糊的一個過渡時期。

**Keywords:** Xunzi, Zisi, Guodian manuscripts, Wuxing  
荀子, 子思, 郭店竹簡, 《五行》

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75. More uncertain would be the claim that the Guodian corpus constitutes a kind of *Zisizi* 子思子, or a collection of writings all associated with Zisi in some way.