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QUOTATION AND THE CONFUCIAN CANON IN EARLY CHINESE MANUSCRIPTS: THE CASE OF “ZI YI” (BLACK ROBES)

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Abstract

Explicit quotation of existing texts, a frequent phenomenon in the early Chinese tradition, appears in a number of recently excavated manuscripts, especially in certain texts of the *ru* tradition that look at the past as a source of supreme authority. Examining the manuscript versions of “Zi yi” and (to a lesser extent) “Min zhi fumu” alongside their transmitted counterparts, the present paper tentatively suggests several points: (a) Compared to their received versions, the manuscript texts are more tightly and uniformly organized around quotations from the *Odes*; they display quotation as a core feature of composition. (b) The *Odes* enjoyed greater authority than the *Documents* and were better guarded against textual corruption and disintegration. (c) Texts organized around *Odes* quotations were often themselves formulaic, interlocking philosophical logic with poetic structure. (d) Such texts performed and extended the very gesture of commemoration and emulation of a past model that the *Odes* were thought to embody. (e) By quoting the *Odes*, a philosophical treatise became linked to the canon and apparently enjoyed a greater chance of transmission.

1. The presence of quotation in early Chinese texts

Like many ancient texts of the received tradition,¹ a number of early Chinese manuscripts include texts that quote from other texts, sometimes marking them

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1 I use “text” as a neutral designation for compositions that could exist in either oral or written form, and co-exist in both. For manuscripts like those under discussion, I in fact assume that

explicitly (e.g., by a certain formula preceding or following the quote), sometimes simply including them in the flow of the argument or narrative. In either form, quotation is more than mere reference to other texts. It is a core feature of textual composition and transmission that raises questions about authorship, redaction, textual integrity, and the overall status and function of the texts that are quoted. Quotation seems to appear especially in manuscripts of texts with a history – texts that were guarded and circulated over time and space.² Such texts are part of a larger literary context where they occupy their place in relation to other texts, and they are preserved and transmitted by specific intellectual groups that, speaking in the most general terms, have an interest to do so. This interest can be explained by the purpose that the texts possess for their communities: as distinct, recognizable artifacts, they offer structure, form, identity, and meaning to the foundational memory of the past and to specific sets of intellectual concepts and moral values. They are meaningful because they express, and continuously generate, intellectual relations and communal participation. By studying, preserving, and circulating them orally or in writing, a community gives a textual voice to the ideas and values that define its identity and coherence and that connect it to its real or imagined origins.

The various texts of a particular community are interrelated in multiple ways. Among them, the practice of direct quotation is a particularly strong and unambiguous device to express the continuity not only of certain ideas but of textual practice itself. Through quotation, a new text points to an earlier one and inscribes both into a common textual system. Moreover, a text that refers to an earlier one is a text expected to be referred to in the future.³ Quotation, in other words, is an explicit rhetorical gesture of texts that were composed in reflection upon earlier texts and hence joined them in their history. As the *Liji* 禮記 notes with respect to bronze inscriptions, “In [composing an inscription], one accomplishes one’s own name by sacrificing to one’s ancestors [...]. When a gentleman looks at an inscription, he praises those who are commended there, and he

they represent specific written instantiations of texts that also circulated through oral teaching and memorization.

2 For this tentative definition, see Kern 2002.

3 For a lucid discussion of Warring States textual communities and intellectual lineages, see Lewis 1999, Chapter 2, “Writing the Masters”. I understand Lewis’s analysis as pointing directly to the structural identity between ancestral and philosophical lineages, sacrificial worship and exegetical transmission; cf. Kern 2000: 346–347.

praises the one who has made [the inscription].”⁴ The same rationale and historical perspective applies to texts quoting earlier texts; quotation is the textual equivalent to ancestor worship. Through quotation, a new text becomes part of a lineage where the prestige and exalted status assigned to the textual ancestor serves, in turn, as the authority that bolsters the status of its descendant. Reaffirming the old text in its continuous authority and thus contributing to the perpetuation of a textual tradition, the new text, now being part of this tradition, also elevates itself and has its own prospects of future transmission enhanced as long as its close attachment to the old text is cherished by the community to which both texts belong.

Among early Chinese manuscripts, the obvious examples of texts with a history are those that have counterparts in the received tradition, that is, those whose history has continued through the present day. So far, such texts account for roughly ten per cent of all excavated manuscripts.⁵ Yet others like the “Wu xing” 五行 text, which enjoyed circulation for at least more than a century (as documented by the Guodian 郭店 and Mawangdui 馬王堆 finds), are of the same category; it is only that their history ceased to continue beyond a certain point. In early manuscripts, the practice of quotation occurs with particular frequency in texts related to the early *ru* 儒 tradition. Here, where the sages and their ways of old are often extolled, the reference to authoritative texts from the past appears as a natural part of the philosophical argument itself. This does not mean that every work of the *ru* tradition needs to be built on quotation; for example, only some of the many texts compiled in the received *Li ji* seem to display this feature.

There are different ways in which quotations appear in excavated manuscripts. Implicit (unmarked) quotations are identifiable only to the extent to which we know them from other texts. It is perfectly possible that we are missing quotations of texts that existed in Warring States and early Han times but have since disappeared (and so far also have not surfaced in other manuscripts). For this reason, our account of quotation is likely to be incomplete or even distorted. For example, the important text that is labelled “Xing zi ming chu” 性自命出 among the Guodian manuscripts and “Xingqing lun” 性情論 among those of the Shanghai Museum corpus⁶ does not seem to include a single quota-

4 *Liji zhengyi* 禮記正義 49.379a: 自成其名焉, 以祀其先祖者也 [...] 是故君子之觀於銘也, 既美其所稱, 又美其所爲.

5 William G. Boltz, forthcoming 2005.

6 In both cases, the label is given by the modern editors of the manuscripts.

tion from another text – despite the fact that it is clearly part of the larger discussions on fate, human nature, emotion, self-cultivation, and the production of music and song that occupied a range of thinkers in Warring States and Han times, and that has settled in a number of other texts both transmitted and excavated.

On the other hand, in many instances of overlapping phrases and other forms of intertextuality, it is quite misleading to speak of quotation in the proper sense. “Quotation” assumes a one-directional relation between two or more texts: a text quotes from something earlier. This rather simple model, however, does not adequately account for the full scope of early Chinese intertextuality. Stock formulations of a particular discourse – for example, on music – were used across a range of texts, testifying to thematic commonality and terminological coherence. Set phrases, topical references, narrative plots, historical anecdotes, and sequences of argument were probably widely enough available for paraphrase or variation to consider their constant appearance a phenomenon more of diffusion and fluidity across a multiplicity of written and oral compositions; rarely is one able to determine an unambiguously stratifiable hierarchy of textual affiliation.⁷ By contrast, to explicitly quote from an identified text is to recognize its distinct integrity and authority vis-à-vis the profuse polyvocality of the overall textual tradition.

This is not to say that the integrity and authority of certain texts must be as sure as their explicit quotations might suggest. As David Schaberg in his study of *Zuo zhuan* 左傳 and *Guoyu* 國語 has pointed out, the same quotation could be in one text ascribed to the *Odes* (*Shi* 詩) and in another one to the *Documents* (*Shu* 書); moreover, speakers in early historiographic texts, when they cited the inherited words, “did not have a comprehensive, even knowledge of their texts” and room must be made for a complex interaction between written and oral

7 Parallel phrasing, or even parallel stories, can be observed both across many early narrative works and in a number of recently excavated manuscripts. One example of the latter are the passages parallel to the *Zhangguo ce* 戰國策 that have been found at Mawangdui 馬王堆; see Blanford 1989. The brief Guodian text “Qiong da yi shi” 窮達以時, in a reference to the Wu Zixu 伍子胥 story, contains a brief passage on slips 10–13 (Jingmen shi bowuguan 1998: 27–28, 145) that closely overlaps with phrasing in *Han shi waizhuan* 韓氏外傳, *Shui yuan* 說苑, and *Xunzi* 荀子; at the same time, the extensive Wu Zixu anecdotal narrative tradition unfolds in many other texts as well. The Guodian text “Zun de yi” 尊德義 contains on slip 22 (Jingmen shi bowuguan 1998: 56, 174) a sentence of eleven characters parallel to one in *Lunyu* 論語, “Tai bo” 泰伯 (8.9); another passage of ten characters that in *Mengzi* 孟子 2A.1 (“Gongsun Chou” 公孫丑) is attributed to Confucius appears (not marked as a quotation) on slips 28–29 (Jingmen shi bowuguan 1998: 57, 174).

transmission of texts and the corresponding manifestations of textual fluidity and variation.⁸ And as has long been noted, quotations from the *Documents* are highly unstable and inconsistent in early China.⁹ Even within the received tradition, the only pre-Qin text that in its *Documents* quotations consistently matches the received text of the so-called “modern script” (*jinwen* 今文) chapters of the *Documents* is *Xunzi* 荀子; all other texts quoting the *Documents* frequently include passages that in neither chapter titles nor wording find correspondences in the received *Documents* (or any other text). Perhaps the *Xunzi* was composed in the same specific social and intellectual milieu in which most of the received version of the *Documents* took shape sometime in the late third century BCE,¹⁰ or its use of the *Documents* was retrospectively standardized when the *Xunzi* was arranged by the imperial bibliographer Liu Xiang 劉向 (79–8 BCE) in the late first century BCE.¹¹ In fact, such retrospective standardization must have happened on a rather large scale across virtually all pre-Qin and Western Han texts that quote from the *Odes*.¹²

2. The Guodian and Shanghai Museum “Zi yi” manuscripts

For a case study not of textual diffusion, but of actual use of quotation in early Chinese texts, the present essay focuses on the “Zi yi” 緇衣 (Black robes) manuscript texts in the Guodian and Shanghai Museum corpora in comparison with their received counterpart in the *Li ji*.¹³ The two “Zi yi” manuscripts are

8 Schaberg 2001: 66–80.

9 It appears that the corpus of texts later referred to as *Documents* was rather loose and heterogeneous; see Chen Mengjia 1985: 11–35; Liu Qiyu 1997: 4–24; Qu Wanli 屈萬里 1983; also Lewis 1999: 105–109 (with further references), and Schaberg 2001: 72–80.

10 To my mind, one candidate for this milieu would be the Qin 秦 (221–207 BCE) imperial court that without question possessed its version of the *Documents*, studied by officially appointed erudites (*boshi* 博士). Most likely, the erudites were responsible for editing, if not indeed also for composing, certain of its chapters; see Kern 2000a: 183–196 (with further references). Note that Li Si 李斯 (d. 208 BCE), the learned chancellor at the Qin imperial court, was a student of Master Xun 荀.

11 A third possibility would be that this retrospective standardization took place with Yang Liang’s 楊倞 (ninth century) redaction of the *Xunzi*.

12 As argued in Kern, forthcoming.

13 For the received *Li ji*, I use the *Li ji zhengyi* 禮記正義 text included in the standard Ruan Yuan 阮元 edition of the *Thirteen Classics*, the *Shisan jing zhushu fu jiaokan ji* 十三經注疏附校勘記 of 1815. For the Guodian manuscript, I use Jingmen shi bowuguan 1998: 15–20,

very similar. While showing a certain number of textual variants between them, they share many graphic peculiarities; furthermore, they are of the same length, contents, and internal textual order.¹⁴ Something similar can be said about the relation between the Guodian “Xing zi ming chu” and the Shanghai Museum “Xing qing lun” manuscripts. Such unusual overlap – which may be expected from manuscripts of the same period and regional (in this case, Chu) script system – has prompted scholars to suspect that the Shanghai Museum slips might even have come from the immediate Guodian area. As they concur in many of their graphic choices, the two “Zi yi” versions also differ in largely the same way from the received “Zi yi” text contained in the *Li ji*. On the basis of their structural coherence – which does not exclude different lexical choices in certain individual words – and for the pragmatic purpose of focusing the analysis on the overall textual structure rather than on the interpretation of individual graphs and words, I will treat the two manuscripts as one.

Within the *Li ji*, the “Zi yi” occupies a special position. It is one of the four chapters that are traditionally associated with Confucius’s grandson Zi Si 子思 and as such are grouped together in the *Li ji*; the other three are “Fang ji” 坊記, “Zhong yong” 中庸, and “Biao ji” 表記. These four chapters, together with the “Da xue” 大學 and “Kongzi xianju” 孔子閒居, contain the vast majority of all quotations from the *Odes*, the *Documents*, and the *Changes* (*Yi* 易) found in the *Li ji*. The following table illustrates the distribution of quotations – usually introduced by either *yun* 云 or *yue* 曰 – in these chapters:¹⁵

127–137; for the Shanghai Museum manuscript, Ma Chengyuan 2001: 5–6, 45–68, 169–213.

14 Ma Chengyuan 2001: 2. For a detailed analysis of the different textual variants of *Odes* quotations in both “Zi yi” manuscripts, see Kern, forthcoming 2005.

15 For the *Documents* quotations, I count all instances of texts where the given titles are known from the transmitted *Documents* (authentic or spurious) as well as texts that are quoted under titles that have the appearance of belonging to the *Documents*. As noted above, the corpus of texts labelled “documents” (*shu* 書) in Warring States times probably much exceeded what became transmitted as the received *Documents*. In “Kongzi xian ju”, four of the eight *Odes* quotations are not marked by an introductory formula; see the discussion of the “Min zhi fumu” 民之父母 below.

	<i>Shi</i> 詩	<i>Shu</i> 書	<i>Yi</i> 易	Others
“Fang ji” 坊記	14	4	2	3
“Zhong yong” 中庸	16			4
“Biao ji” 表記	18	3	3	
“Zi yi” 緇衣	22	15	1	
“Da xue” 大學	12	9		1
“Kongzi xianju” 孔子閒居	8			
<i>Total</i>	90	31	6	8

Table 1: Quotations in the “Zi Si zi” chapters, “Da xue”, and “Kongzi xian ju”

By comparison, there is a total of only 13 *Odes* quotations that appear in nine of the altogether forty-four remaining chapters of the *Li ji*;¹⁶ quotations from other texts are of about the same number. This shows that even among texts considered to belong to the *ru* tradition, quotation of earlier texts is not a general phenomenon. In several instances, only a single *Odes* quotation appears at the very end of a chapter, marking its conclusion. By contrast, within the four so-called “Zi Si zi” chapters, quotation is part of a recurrent formulaic structure: a brief passage that usually begins with the formula *zi yue* 子曰 (“the master said”), is then followed by the actual – normally brief – saying, and finds its conclusion with the quotation of a classical text. “Fang ji” (38 paragraphs), “Biao ji” (54 paragraphs), and “Zi yi” (24 paragraphs) are entirely composed of such brief paragraphs; in “Zhong yong”, they are much longer and also interrupted by other lengthy passages. Outside the four “Zi Si zi” chapters, no part of the *Li ji* contains a series of paragraphs all beginning with “the master said”. In other words, with the notable exception of “Da xue” and “Kongzi xian ju”, the use of quotations in the *Li ji* is mostly bound to a specific formulaic paragraph structure (and to a whole chain of such paragraphs). In such passages, the two quotation markers *zi yue* (“the master said”) and, for example, *shi yue* 詩曰 (“an ode says”) frame the text proper. A typical example is paragraph 2 of the “Zi yi” in the *Li ji*:

16 In the standard division of the Ruan Yuan edition. The chapters including *Odes* quotations are “Tan gong, xia” 檀弓下 (one quotation), “Li yun” 禮運 (one), “Li qi” 禮器 (one), “Da zhuan” 大傳 (one), “Yue ji” 樂記 (three), “Ji yi” 祭義 (two), “Jing jie” 經解 (one), “She yi” 射義 (two), and “Pin yi” 聘義 (one).

子曰：好賢如緇衣，惡惡如巷伯，則爵不瀆而民作愿，刑不試而民咸服。大雅曰：儀刑文王。萬國作孚。

The master said: "If [the ruler] is fond of worthiness as in 'Black robes' and detests the detestable as in 'The chief eunuch,' then without the frequent conferring of ranks the common people will be stimulated to be kind-hearted, and without the application of punishments the common people will all be obedient." A Major Elegantia says: "A model of propriety was King Wen, the ten-thousand states acted trustfully."¹⁷

Not counting the formula "the master said" at the beginning of each paragraph, the received "Zi yi" of the *Li ji* contains explicitly introduced quotation in twenty-two of its twenty-four paragraphs; only paragraphs 1 and 4 do not include such quotes. In other words, the entire text of the "Zi yi" is tightly interwoven with passages that point explicitly to other named texts of the tradition. For the composer of the "Zi yi", it was obviously important to support virtually every paragraph by a quotation, thus creating a unified rhetorical structure of argument. We are not in all cases sure about the provenance of a quotation, as a number of citations that appear in the "Zi yi" do not have a counterpart in received texts. Judging from their wording, they do, however, seem to belong to the larger body of texts labelled *shu* 書 ("documents") in Warring States times, and like the quotations that match the received *Documents*, they are introduced by a specific title – perhaps a chapter title, perhaps something else. This way of assigning individual titles, as opposed to the generic designation *shu*, clearly distinguishes *Documents* quotations from those of the *Odes*; the latter are almost always cited only as *shi* 詩 ("songs") or under the designation of one of their broader categories of "Major Elegantiae" (*daya* 大雅) and "Minor Elegantiae" (*xiaoya* 小雅).¹⁸

The rhetorical device of opening a "Zi yi" paragraph with the phrase "The master said" and then ending it with another explicit quotation turns these paragraphs into self-contained, framed textual units. At the same time, the extension of this structure to virtually all paragraphs of the entire chapter defines them as a

17 Both "Black robes" (Zi yi 緇衣; Mao 75) and "The chief eunuch" (Xiang bo 巷伯; Mao 200) are songs from the *Odes*. The final quote is from "King Wen" (Wen wang 文王; Mao 235), the first and most prominent song in the "Major Elegantiae" (*daya* 大雅) section of the *Odes*. My translation of the *Odes* quotation is indebted to Shaughnessy 2004: 294–295, who reads *xing* 刑 as *xing* 型 ("model"). The manuscript version of the paragraph will be discussed below.

18 Within the entire *Li ji*, there are only three occasions on which a *Documents* quotation is introduced by the generic formula *shu yun* 書云 or *shu yue* 書曰 ("a document says"): one in the "Fang ji" chapter and two in the "Sangfu si zhi" 喪服四制 chapter.

coherent, consciously related series of statements – an impression further strengthened by the fact that this particular paragraph structure is by and large confined to the four “Zi Si zi” chapters. Quotation thus appears as a compositional device that provides integrity and stability to each individual paragraph as much as it lends unity to their entire series. Quotation has several different functions here, among them the rhetorical reference to a set of established and authoritative proof texts to which virtually each paragraph becomes attached. Yet, perhaps equally important, the fixed formal structure imposed on the paragraphs – both individually and as a series – was certainly helpful in guarding the stability of their transmission.

Examining the “Zi yi” of the *Li ji*, one finds a total of twenty-two quotations from the *Odes*, all having counterparts in the received version of the anthology. In addition, the received “Zi yi” contains one quote from the *Changes* (in paragraph 24), as well as a total of fifteen other quotes under nine different titles. Eight of these nine titles find their counterpart in the received *Documents*: four in the authentic “modern script” version of the text and four in the spurious “ancient script” (*guwen* 古文) chapters. The remaining title refers to a speaker in one of the “ancient script” chapters, “Xian you yi de” 咸有一德. It is likely that the titles mentioned in the “Zi yi” helped to inspire those of the much later spurious *Documents* chapters. At the same time, their appearance in manuscripts dating from ca. 300 BCE shows that *Documents* chapters of these titles – chapters later lost – did exist in late Warring States times.¹⁹ In the present essay, I will refer to all fifteen passages that are quoted under nine different titles as “*Documents* quotations.” Regardless of whether or not they survive in the authentic “modern script” recension of the *Documents*, in around 300 BCE – the presumed date of the Guodian and Shanghai Museum manuscripts – these fifteen quotations all belonged to the same body of authoritative texts.

We can compare the altogether thirty-eight quotations included in the *Li ji* “Zi yi” on several levels to their counterparts found in the Guodian and Shanghai Museum “Zi yi” manuscripts. We can ask which quotations appear, how they compare in length, how they are marked, how they are arranged, and how they differ in their titles and in their text. To begin with, it may be noted that the sequence of paragraphs in the two manuscripts differs from that of the *Li ji* “Zi

19 The confirmation of a late Warring States date for (so far) one and a half chapters of the *Li ji* (“Zi yi” and “Kongzi xian ju” 孔子閒居; for the latter, see below), and hence of a *terminus ante quem* of ca. 300 BCE for their quotations, is the only news here. Beyond the few titles and quotations now seen in manuscripts, the matter has no bearing on the authenticity of the “ancient text” *Documents*.

yi”, and that this difference affects the use of quotation. The following table compares the two sequences:

<i>Li ji</i>	Manuscripts	<i>Li ji</i>	Manuscripts	<i>Li ji</i>	Manuscripts
1	—	9	9	17	5
2	1	10	3	18	18
3	12	11	2	19	21
4	8	12	4	20	22
5	7	13	13	21	20
6	6	14	11	22	19
7	14, 15	15	10	23	17
8	16	16	—	24	23

Table 2: Paragraph sequence in the *Li ji* and manuscript versions of the “Zi yi”

Li ji paragraphs 1 and 16 are not included in the manuscripts while *Li ji* paragraph 7 is split into two – paragraphs 14 and 15 – there. As a result, the manuscripts comprise twenty-three paragraphs versus the twenty-four of the *Li ji*. As is evident from the table, the overall sequence of paragraphs differs substantially between the manuscripts and the *Li ji*. However, certain clusters of paragraphs are stable across both versions, yet with again diverging paragraph sequences within the clusters:

<i>Li ji</i>	Manuscripts
4–5–6	8–7–6
7–8	14–15–16
10–11–12	3–2–4
14–15	11–10
19–20–21–22	21–22–20–19

Table 3: Matching paragraph clusters in the *Li ji* and manuscript versions of the “Zi yi”

Although the manuscripts do not include *Li ji* paragraphs 1 and 16, they still contain all twenty-two *Odes* quotations found in the received text, as paragraphs 1 and 16 of the received text do not quote from the *Odes*. In addition, the manuscripts contain – on slip 26 of the Guodian manuscript and on slips 13–14 of the Shanghai Museum version – a ten-character quotation (introduced by the formu-

la *shi yun* 詩云 [“an ode says”])²⁰ from a “lost Ode” (*yi shi* 逸詩) no longer extant. Furthermore, a quotation from the *Ode* “Du ren shi” 都人士 (Mao 225) in the Guodian manuscript includes an additional tetrasyllabic line not found in the received version of the song (neither in the received *Odes* nor in the received “Zi yi” or anywhere else). Fragmentary evidence suggests that the line was also included in the Shanghai Museum “Zi yi”.²¹

Of the *Li ji* “Zi yi” quotations beyond those from the *Odes*, the manuscripts include all but the following:

- (a) The four *Documents* quotations found in *Li ji* paragraph 16 are absent, as the entire paragraph is not part of the manuscript text. paragraph 16 is the longest of the entire received text and the only one containing such density of *Documents* quotations (while at the same time lacking any *Odes* quotations). Compared to the formulaic structure of the rest of the “Zi yi”, the paragraph is thus somewhat anomalous. It is the only longer *Li ji* paragraph that is not contained in the manuscripts (the other paragraph not included is the very first of the *Li ji* version, a brief note of nineteen characters that does not include quotation at all).
- (b) Both the *Documents* quotation and the *Changes* quotation at the end of the final *Li ji* paragraph 24 are not found in the manuscripts. There, the final paragraph ends with the *Odes* quotation that in the received version immediately precedes the *Documents* quotation.

Altogether, the manuscripts do not include any *Documents* quotations beyond those found in the *Li ji* “Zi yi” and no quotation from the *Changes* altogether. At the same time, they match all *Odes* quotations found in the received text and

20 Note that *yue* 曰 and *yun* 云 are being used in the same grammatical function to introduce direct quotations in *Li ji* “Zi yi”.

21 The last two characters of this extra line appear at the beginning of slip 10 of the Shanghai Museum manuscript; the first ten characters of the “Du ren shi” quote, together with the five characters preceding it, are missing. However, both the end of slip 9 and the beginning of slip 10 are broken off. The bamboo fragment that apparently broke off from the end of slip 9 is now in the possession of The Chinese University of Hong Kong; it contains the five characters preceding the “Du ren shi” quotation and the first six characters of the quotation proper. The following four characters of the quotation may have broken off from the beginning of slip 10 of the Shanghai Museum manuscript; see Ma Chengyuan 2001: 184. It is also possible, and according to Matthias Richter’s measurements of the slips perhaps more likely, that at the end of the Hong Kong fragment, a twelfth character is broken off, and that only three characters are missing from the beginning of slip 10.

contain an additional one that is unknown to the received literary tradition. Thus, as illustrated in the following table, the manuscript and the *Li ji* versions of the “Zi yi” differ in the relative weight they consign to the sources they are quoting:

	<i>Li ji</i>	Manuscripts
<i>Odes</i>	22 (57.98 %)	23 (69.69 %)
<i>Documents</i>	15 (39.47 %)	10 (30.30 %)
<i>Changes</i>	1 (2.63 %)	—
Total (% rounded)	38 (100 %)	33 (100 %)

Table 4: Number of quotations in the *Li ji* and manuscript versions of the “Zi yi”

It is impossible to determine whether or not the “Zi yi” version that is represented in the two available manuscripts was directly ancestral to the received *Li ji* “Zi yi”. It is possible that both in its sequential order of paragraphs and in its choices of quotation, the received text followed other early versions; it is also possible that the *Li ji* editors were working from the text that is now known to us in the two manuscripts, and that in adding and deleting quotations, they made deliberate changes. What we can say, however, is that in the manuscript version, as compared to the received “Zi yi”, the *Odes* are given substantially greater weight than quotations from other sources.²² As will be seen below, this obser-

- 22 It is necessary here to briefly discuss another approach to the “Zi yi”. In his comparison between the “Zi yi” manuscripts and their *Li ji* counterpart, Shaughnessy 2004 has argued that the *Li ji* editor had arranged his version on the basis of a bamboo manuscript textually identical or near-identical to that of the manuscripts, but that the manuscript copy available to him had disintegrated into a pile of individual bamboo slips no longer held together by chords. As a consequence, he lost and displaced parts of the text – and also added material from other sources – when trying to reassemble it. This hypothesis is based on several assumptions, among them that of a relatively standardized, but not exactly fixed, number of characters per slip (ca. 21–24) and that of a manuscript format where new sections began at the top of a new slip. Appealing as the hypothesis – like so many mono-causal explanations – might be at first sight, I find it unpersuasive on several grounds. First, there is no reason to assume that the later *Li ji* editor was actually working on the basis of a text that was identical or near-identical to just the two manuscripts we now have that come from the same period and region. Second, even if there was a particular version with its slips in disarray, it is unlikely that this one manuscript formed the basis of the later *Li ji* chapter; surely, in Han times the “Zi yi” was prominent and popular enough to be widely known and accessible from both oral memory and written texts, and an editor was not just working in isolation. (Note, for example, the well-known episode that Liu Xiang 劉向 (79–8 BCE), when in the late first century BCE preparing the *Xunzi* text for the imperial library, had to sift through

vation is further corroborated by how the *Odes* are placed in the individual paragraphs.

With respect to the length of quotations within the “Zi yi”, the manuscripts and the received version largely converge, albeit with some notable exceptions:

- (a) The quote of “Jie nan shan” 節南山 (Mao 191) includes eight lines in *Li ji* paragraph 17, the first five of which do not appear in the received text of the *Odes*. These five lines also do not appear in the manuscripts (paragraph 5) where the quotation hence consists of only three lines. The first two lines of this quote in *Li ji* are in the pentasyllabic meter that is otherwise extremely rare in the *Odes*; moreover, the sixth line of this quotation is also pentasyllabic in the *Li ji* but tetrasyllabic both in the manuscripts and in the received *Odes* anthology. In this line, the difference lies in the additional auxiliary verb *neng* 能 – which is clearly a dispensable element.²³

ten times the material, including numerous duplicates of entire chapters, of what he then determined to be the authoritative version; see Knoblock 1988–1994: 1.105–10.) Third, apparently rather flexible calculations based on the number of characters per slip – Shaughnessy’s examples range from twenty-one to twenty-four characters per slip – are too easily manipulated to serve as the single major piece of evidence. Fourth, even within the single case of the “Zi yi”, the proposed method may at best account for only some passages while offering no guidance at all on others. (In one such instance [p. 293], Shaughnessy tries to rescue his case by raising the possibility of another, unknown and different, manuscript version that in this particular passage may have served as the basis for the *Li ji* – an assumption that, in fact, would call his entire methodology into question.) Fifth, the hypothesis fails to explain the numerous graphic variants that show clear traces of oral transmission, as I have argued in Kern 2002, 2003, and forthcoming 2005. In short, while manuscript copying – just as the routines of oral teaching and memorization – certainly had its place in Warring States textual culture, I remain unconvinced by Shaughnessy’s exclusive focus on the process of copying from one particular manuscript as the purported basis for the formation of our received texts from early China. (Note that the methodology Shaughnessy brings to the “Zi yi” becomes even more dubious as soon as one allows for the *Li ji* editor’s concurrent use of several manuscripts: in that case, all of them had to be in disarray, and they all had to be exactly identical in the way how in the different sections, they included different numbers of characters per slip.)

- 23 Here and in the following, I illustrate my observations of the *structural* differences between the *Li ji* (LJ) version and the text from Guodian (GD; representing both manuscripts, as they are structurally identical). The individual paragraphs are indicated by number (thus, LJ 17 = *Li ji* paragraph 17, corresponding to Guodian paragraph 5 [GD 5]). As noted above, at this level of analysis I am not concerned with the actual manuscript graphs, their different possible interpretations, and their implications of graphic and lexical variation; instead, the

	QM ²⁴	<i>Odes</i> quotation		
LJ 17	詩云:	昔吾有先正. 其言明且清. 國家以寧, 都邑以成, 庶民以生.	誰能秉國成.	不自爲正, 卒勞百姓.
GD 5	詩云:		誰秉國成.	不自爲貞, 卒勞百姓.

- (b) *Li ji* paragraph 9 quotes the first six lines of the *Ode* “Du ren shi”. Manuscripts paragraph 9 includes what are apparently variants of lines three, four, and six. As in *Li ji* paragraph 17 / manuscripts paragraph 5, the *Odes* quotation in the manuscripts is thus drastically shorter than in *Li ji*. No other “Zi yi” paragraph quotes more than four lines from an *Ode*; unlike their *Li ji* counterparts, the two shorter manuscript quotations are in the standard range – between one and four lines, and in most cases a couplet – of other *Odes* quotations across the whole text.

	QM	<i>Odes</i> quotation			
LJ 9	詩云:	彼都人士. 狐裘黃黃.	其容不改, 出言有章.	行歸于周.	萬民所望.
GD 9	詩云:		其容不改, 出言有X.		黎民所信.

- (c) A *Documents* quotation in *Li ji* paragraph 15 contains sixteen characters where its counterpart in manuscripts paragraph 10 has fifteen. The two versions also differ in some of their wording.²⁵

	QM	<i>Documents</i> quotation
LJ 15	君陳曰:	未見聖. 若已弗克見. 既見聖, 亦不克由聖.
GD 10	君陳云:	未見聖. 如其弗克見. 我既見, 我弗迪聖.

- (d) A *Documents* quotation in *Li ji* paragraph 14 is four characters longer than the one in manuscripts paragraph 11 and also partly different in wording.

structural differences on the level of the text are to be rendered transparent and easy to comprehend. I thus use the simplest-possible representation by providing the text as *interpreted* by the editors in Jingmen shi bowuguan 1998. Graphs that the editors could not transcribe into standard forms are written as “X”. I divide the text in distinct sections to isolate for immediate recognition those where the *Li ji* and manuscript versions diverge.

24 Here and in the following tables, the abbreviation QM stands for ‘quotation marker’.

25 The quotation appears only in the spurious “ancient script” chapter “Jun chen” 君陳 of the *Documents*; its version there matches that of the *Li ji*.

The manuscript version is more rhythmically coherent than that of the *Li ji*:²⁶

	QM	<i>Documents</i> quotation		
LJ 14	葉公之顧命曰:	毋以小謀敗大作.	毋以嬖御人疾莊后.	毋以嬖御士疾莊士, 大夫, 卿士.
GD 11	X公之顧命云:	毋以小謀敗大作.	毋以嬖御塞莊后.	毋以嬖士塞大夫, 卿士.

- (e) In a quotation from the genuine “modern script” *Documents* chapter “Lü xing” 呂刑 (in *Li ji* quoted as “Fu xing” 甫刑), manuscripts paragraph 12 does not contain the initial two characters that appear in both *Li ji* paragraph 3 and in the received version of the *Documents*. However, the manuscript version is again rhythmically more coherent through metric repetition.

	QM	<i>Documents</i> quotation		
LJ 3	甫刑曰:	苗民匪用命.	制以刑.	惟作五虐之刑曰法.
GD 12	呂刑云:	非用戮.	制以刑.	惟作五虐之刑曰法.

- (f) In *Li ji* paragraph 13, a quotation again from “Lü xing” includes five characters where manuscripts paragraph 13 as well as the received *Documents* text have four. The difference is a negation particle in the *Li ji* version that already Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (127–200) in his *Li ji* commentary has argued should be elided.²⁷ Within the “Zi yi” paragraph under discussion, the quotation is immediately preceded by another one from the “Kang gao” 康誥 chapter of the “modern script” *Documents*, which is also in the form of a single tetrasyllabic line.

	QM	<i>Documents</i> quotation
LJ 13	甫刑曰:	播刑之不迪.
GD 13	呂刑云:	播刑之迪.

Another aspect of direct quotation is how it is formally marked. The *Odes* quotations in the “Zi yi” manuscripts are introduced by the formulae *shi yun* 詩云

26 The quotation and its title do not have counterparts in the literary tradition.

27 See *Li ji zhengyi* 55.421a.

(“an *Ode* says”; 19 times), *daya yun* 大雅云 (“a Major Elegancia says”; twice), or *xiaoya yun* 小雅云 (“a Minor Elegancia says”; twice). In the received *Li ji* “Zi yi”, the two *daya yun* markers are both given as *shi yun*; one of the *xiaoya yun* is given as *xiaoya yue* 小雅曰; three *shi yun* are given as *daya yue* 大雅曰. The only *guofeng* 國風 (Airs of the States) song quoted is identified by its title “Ge tan” 葛覃 (Mao 2) in *Li ji* paragraph 22 – making it the only *Ode* mentioned by its specific title, and not by one of the generic terms *shi*, *daya*, or *xiaoya* – while it appears as the usual generic *shi* (as part of the formula *shi yun*) in manuscripts paragraph 19. In *Li ji* “Zi yi”, all *Documents* quotations and the one instance of the *Changes* are marked by the formula “XY *yue* 曰”, with “XY” almost invariably being a binomial title.²⁸ By contrast, the “Zi yi” manuscripts uniformly use *yun* for all their quotations from both *Odes* and *Documents*. The use of both *yun* and *yue* in *Li ji* “Zi yi” does not seem to follow any identifiable system or principle.

In terms of the compositional structure of the “Zi yi”, the most significant difference between the *Li ji* and the manuscript version is the overall arrangement of quotations across the entire text. The distinctions discussed so far suggest that the manuscript version shows greater uniformity and regularity in the structure of the quotations proper as well as in their introductory markers. The macro-format of their distribution and overall textual order furnishes even stronger evidence that the “Zi yi” of the manuscripts, unlike the one from the *Li ji*, is a text tightly defined and organized on the principle of quotation:

- (a) *Li ji* paragraph 1, which does not include quotation, is not present in the manuscripts. Note that the introductory formula is not *zi yue* 子曰 (“the master said”) but *zi yan zhi yue* 子言之曰 (“the master spoke about it, saying”), a format otherwise not used in the “Zi yi”.

	“the master spoke about it, saying”	“the master’s” words
LJ 1	子言之曰:	爲上易事也. 爲下易知也, 則刑不煩矣.

28 The two exceptions are *yi yue* 易曰 (“the *Changes* say”) in *Li ji* paragraph 24 (manuscripts paragraph 23) and *She gong zhi gu ming yue* 葉公之顧命曰 (“the testamentary charge of the Lord of She says”) in *Li ji* paragraph 14 (manuscripts paragraph 11). One might be inclined to speculate that because some of the *Documents* quotations are titled with the name of the person who speaks (and is thus quoted in “Zi yi”), *yue* may refer directly to him and not to the *Documents* text in which his speech appears. This is however not true for all instances; *yue* is used also in reference to text titles.

(b) The first paragraph of the manuscripts is *Li ji* paragraph 2.

	“the master said”	“the master’s” words	QM	<i>Odes</i> quotation
LJ 2	子曰:	好賢如緇衣. 惡惡如巷伯, 則爵不瀆而民作愿. 刑不試而民咸服.	大雅曰:	儀刑文王, 萬國作孚.
GD 1	夫子曰:	好美如好緇衣. 惡惡如惡巷伯, 則民臧它而刑不屯.	詩云:	儀刑文王, 萬邦作孚.

Compared to the *Li ji* version of this paragraph translated above, the manuscript text shows a number of noteworthy lexical differences, among them an altogether more succinct wording of the statement by “the master”:

The master said: If [the ruler] is fond of beauty as [one is fond of it in] “Black robes” and detests the detestable as [it is detested in] “The chief eunuch”,²⁹ then the people will all be (?),³⁰ and the model will not crumble.³¹ An *Ode* says: “A model of propriety was King Wen, / the ten-thousand states acted trustfully.”

Most remarkable, however, is the fact that this paragraph constitutes the beginning of the manuscript text, with “the master” evoking the admirable behavior expressed in two *Odes* – “Zi yi” and “Xiang bo” – as the model for a ruler to follow. The manuscript version thus starts out with a direct reference to the *Ode* “Ziyi” that in the *Li ji* then appears as the title of the entire chapter.³² In addition, the paragraph ends with a quotation from one of the central texts within the entire *Odes* corpus, “Wen wang” (King Wen), that again speaks of the past as the model to emulate.

29 The text seems to say “detests the detestable as he detests the chief eunuch”; but this does not make sense. “Black robes” and “The chief eunuch” are surely references to the two *Odes* of these titles. While in the first *Ode*, a “black robe” is indeed praised, the “chief eunuch” in the second song is not detested. He is the person who complains about the detestful behavior of the slanderers at court, and who claims to have composed the song as a piece of advice.

30 Here, I follow the Shanghai Museum editors’ suggestion of *xian* 咸 (for what the Guodian editors read as *zang* 臧). The following graph, interpreted by the Guodian editors as 它, is obscure in both manuscripts.

31 The Guodian and Shanghai Museum editors read 型 as *xing* 刑 (“punishments”) and withhold any conclusive judgment on what is transcribed as *chun* 屯 in the Guodian text and as 𠂔 in the Shanghai Museum version. Shaughnessy 2004, 294–295, has persuasively argued that 型 should indeed be taken as *xing* 型 (“model”) and 屯 / 𠂔 as *dun* 頓 (“crumble”); thus, “the model does not crumble”.

32 The “Zi yi” manuscripts, like most early Chinese manuscripts, are not titled in the original.

- (c) *Li ji* paragraph 3 adds a concluding general statement of twelve characters after its quotation from the *Documents* chapter “Lü xing”. By contrast, the corresponding manuscript paragraph 12 concludes with the quotation itself. Furthermore, in the manuscript version, this quotation is immediately preceded by an *Odes* quotation (of a “lost ode”) that is absent in the *Li ji* text.

LJ 3

“the master said”	子曰:
“the master’s” words	夫民教之以德. 齊之以禮, 則民有格心. 教之以政, 齊之以刑, 則民有遜心. 故君民者, 子以愛之, 則民親之. 信以結之, 則民不倍. 恭以蒞之, 則民有孫心.
QM	
<i>Odes</i> quotation	
QM	甫刑曰:
<i>Documents</i> quotation	苗民匪用命, 制以刑, 惟作五虐之刑曰法.
concluding statement outside quotation	是以民有惡德, 而遂絕其世也.

GD 12

“the master said”	子曰:
“the master’s” words	長民者教之以德. 齊之以禮, 則民有歡心. 教之以政, 齊之以刑, 則民有X心. 故慈以愛之, 則民有親. 信以結之, 則民不倍. 恭以蒞之, 則民有遜心.
QM	詩云:
<i>Odes</i> quotation	吾夫夫共 X X, X 人不斂.
QM	呂刑云:
<i>Documents</i> quotation	非用茲, 制以刑, 惟作五虐之刑曰法.
concluding statement outside quotation	是以民有惡德, 而遂絕其世也.

- (d) *Li ji* paragraph 4 does not include a quotation, while *Li ji* paragraph 5 contains two from the *Odes* and one from the *Documents* chapter “Lü xing”. In the manuscripts, by contrast, the first of the two *Odes* quotations found in *Li ji* paragraph 5 appears in manuscripts paragraph 8 (corresponding to *Li ji* paragraph 4) while only the second is found in manuscripts paragraph 7 (corresponding to *Li ji* paragraph 5). Thus, the manuscript paragraph corresponding to *Li ji* paragraph 4 adheres to the standard format of ending with an *Odes* quote, and the manuscript paragraph corresponding to *Li ji* paragraph 5 has one *Odes* and one *Documents* quote, following the extended standard format that is also observed in several other paragraphs.

(Note further that the manuscript places the *Odes* quotation before the one from “Lü xing”. In the *Li ji* text, the second *Odes* quotation is placed at the very end.) As a result, both manuscripts paragraphs participate in the regular paragraph structure, while their *Li ji* counterparts both deviate from it. The fact that a quotation from the *Odes* could serve as proof text for the philosophical argument in either one of the two paragraphs points to the inherent flexibility and generality of meaning of such quotations.

LJ 4

“the master said”	子曰:
“the master’s” words	下之事上也. 不從其所令. 從其所行, 上好是物, 下必有甚者矣. 故上之所好惡, 不可不慎也. 是民之表也.
QM	
<i>Odes</i> quotation	

GD 8

“the master said”	子曰:
“the master’s” words	下之事上也. 不從其所以命, 而從其所行, 上好此物也. 下必有甚安者矣. 故上之好惡, 不可不慎也. 民之東也.
QM	詩云:
<i>Odes</i> quotation	兢兢師尹, 民具尔瞻.

LJ 5

“the master said”	子曰:
“the master’s” words	禹立三年. 百姓以仁遂焉. 豈必盡仁.
QM	詩云:
<i>Odes</i> quotation	赫赫師尹, 民具爾瞻.
QM	甫刑曰:
<i>Documents</i> quotation	一人有慶, 兆民賴之.
QM	大雅曰:
<i>Odes</i> quotation	成王之孚, 下土之式.

GD 7

“the master said”	子曰:
“the master’s” words	禹立三年. 百姓以仁道. 豈必盡仁.
QM	詩云:
<i>Odes</i> quotation	成王之孚, 下土之式.
QM	呂刑云:
<i>Documents</i> quotation	一人有慶, 萬民賴之.

- (e) *Li ji* paragraph 7 is relatively long and addresses two separate themes; it closes with a single *Odes* quotation. *Li ji* paragraph 8, which is of average length, closes with two *Odes* quotations. In the manuscripts, *Li ji* paragraph 7 is divided into the two paragraphs 14 and 15. Manuscripts paragraph 14, matching what is the first part of *Li ji* paragraph 7, is concluded with one of the two *Odes* quotations that in the *Li ji* stand together at the end of paragraph 8. Manuscripts paragraph 16, which corresponds to *Li ji* paragraph 8, thus closes with only one *Odes* quotation. Manuscripts paragraph 15, corresponding to the second half of *Li ji* paragraph 7, is introduced by the standard formula “the master said” (which is absent at this point of the *Li ji* text) and thus clearly signals a new section. Following this introductory formula, manuscripts paragraph 15 contains the entire second part of *Li ji* paragraph 7, including the final *Odes* quotation. As in the case of *Li ji* paragraphs 4 and 5, one notes that the same *Odes* quotation is used to support two different statements in the two different “Zi yi” versions. Altogether, the structural differences between *Li ji* paragraphs 7 and 8 on the one hand, and manuscripts paragraphs 14, 15, and 16, on the other hand, show the manuscript version as the more coherently organized text.

LJ 7

“the master said”	子曰:
“the master’s” words	王言如絲, 其出如綸. 王言如綸, 其出如紼. 故大人不倡游言. 可言也, 不可行, 君子弗言也. 可行也, 不可言, 君子弗行也, 則民言不危行, 而行不危言矣:
QM	詩云:
<i>Odes</i> quotation	淑慎爾止, 不譽于儀.

LJ 8

“the master said”	子曰:
“the master’s” words	君子道人以言, 而禁人以行. 故言必慮其所終, 而行必稽其所敝, 則民謹於言而慎於行.
QM	詩云:
<i>Odes</i> quotation	慎爾出話, 敬爾威儀.
QM	大雅曰:
<i>Odes</i> quotation	穆穆文王, 於緝熙敬止.

GD 14

“the master said”	子曰:
“the master’s” words	王言如絲, 其出如X. 王言如索, 其出如紼. 故大人不倡流.
QM	詩云:
<i>Odes</i> quotation	慎尔出話, 敬尔威儀.

GD 15

“the master said”	子曰:
“the master’s” words	可言不可行, 君子弗言. 可行不可言, 君子弗行, 則民言不X行, 不X言.
QM	詩云:
<i>Odes</i> quotation	叔慎尔止, 不讐于儀.

GD 16

“the master said”	子曰:
“the master’s” words	君子道人以言, 而X以行. 故言則慮其所終, 行則稽其所敝, 則民慎於言而謹於行.
QM	詩云:
<i>Odes</i> quotation	穆穆文王, 於緝熙敬止.

- (f) *Li ji* paragraph 18 contains two separate parts. It begins with a brief section of nineteen characters, preceded by the usual “the master said”. Then begins another section, also starting with “the master said”. The first section, which does not include quotation, is not present in the corresponding manuscripts paragraph 18. Here, the remaining section, ending with quotations from the *Odes* and the *Documents*, is formally in line with the other paragraphs. It differs from its *Li ji* counterpart by putting the quote from the *Odes* before that from the *Documents*.

LJ 18

“the master said”	子曰:
“the master’s” words	下之事上也. 身不正, 言不信, 則義不壹. 行無類也.
“the master said”	子曰:
“the master’s” words	言有物而行有格也. 是以生則不可奪志, 死則不可奪名. 故君子多聞. 質而守之. 多志, 質而親之. 精知, 略而行之.
QM	君陳曰:
<i>Documents</i> quotation	出入自爾師虞, 庶言同.
QM	詩云:
<i>Odes</i> quotation	淑人君子, 其儀一也.

GD 18

“the master said”	子曰:
“the master’s” words	
“the master said”	子曰:
“the master’s” words	君子言有物行有格. 此以生不可奪志. 死不可奪名. 故君子多聞, 齊而守之. 多志, 齊而親之. 精知, 略而行之.
QM	詩云:
<i>Odes</i> quotation	淑人君子, 其儀一也.
QM	君陳云:
<i>Document</i> quotation	出入自爾師虞, 庶言同.

- (g) *Li ji* paragraph 24 ends with a series of three quotations: a short, standard-format quotation from the *Odes* is followed by a longer *Documents* quotation, which is again followed by a *Changes* quotation. The corresponding manuscripts paragraph 23 just ends with the *Odes* quotation according to the “Zi yi” standard format.

LJ 24

“the master said”	子曰:
“the master’s” words	南人有言曰: 人而無恆, 不可以爲卜筮. 古之遺言與. 龜筮猶不能知也, 而況於人乎.
QM	詩云:
<i>Odes</i> quotation	我龜既厭, 不我告猶.
QM	兌命曰:
<i>Documents</i> quotation	爵無及惡德民. 立而正事, 純而祭祀. 是爲不敬. 事煩則亂, 事神則難.
QM	易曰:
<i>Changes</i> quotation	不恆其德, 或承之羞, 恆其德貞, 婦人吉, 夫子凶.

GD 23

“the master said”	子曰:
“the master’s” words	宋人有言曰: 人而亡恆, 不可爲卜筮也. 其古之遺言與. 龜筮猶弗知而況於人乎.
QM	詩云:
<i>Odes</i> quotation	我龜既厭, 不我告猷.

As noted above, the manuscript “Zi yi” contains twenty-three paragraphs. This structure is marked by a square punctuation mark (in the Shanghai manuscript a stroke) after each paragraph. Moreover, following the final paragraph is a note *ershi you san* 二十又三 (“twenty-three”). Whatever the specific purpose of this note may have been, and to whomever it may have been directed, it is a statement on the definite length of the manuscript text (and perhaps a confirmation that the manuscript matches a pre-existing text in its entirety). Together with the twenty-three square punctuation marks, it is an explicit and self-referential expression of textual order. If the received “Zi yi” indeed developed from the version we see in the two manuscripts, a later editor must have consciously changed the earlier text for reasons we do not understand.

In addition to the individual structural differences listed so far, there is another element in the arrangement of quotations that sets the manuscript and *Li ji* versions apart from each other. The received “Zi yi” includes not only a larger number of *Documents* quotations altogether but also seems to assign both *Documents* and *Odes* the same status as proof texts. Thus, *Li ji* paragraphs 3, 13, 14, and 16 contain only *Documents* quotations but no *Odes* quotations. The manuscripts do not include the received paragraph 16, and their version of received paragraph 3 contains an additional *Odes* quotation from a “lost ode”. They also

do not include *Li ji* paragraph 1 (without any quotation); and finally, the section corresponding to *Li ji* paragraph 4 is given an *Odes* quotation (that in the *Li ji* appears in paragraph 5). Thus, while the *Li ji* “Zi yi” contains five paragraphs without an *Odes* quotation, the manuscript version has only two. Moreover, where both an *Odes* quotation and a *Documents* quotation appear together in the same *Li ji* paragraph of the received text, their order appears arbitrary. In the manuscripts, the *Odes* quotation always precedes the *Documents* quotation.

In sum, compared to the *Li ji* “Zi yi”, the arrangement of quotation in the manuscripts shows the text to be more systematically organized and the *Odes* to be given greater weight. A particularly eloquent expression of the elevated status assigned to the *Odes* is that the manuscript version – unlike the one in *Li ji* – starts out with a reference to the *Ode* “Zi yi”. In the manuscripts’ initial reference to the *Ode* “Zi yi” (further extended to another *Ode*, “Xiang bo”), “the master” recommends the *Odes* as the authoritative source from which a ruler should take his pattern of government so that “the model will not crumble”. Following this dictum, the paragraph closes with a quotation from another *Ode* that serves as proof text to support “the master’s” emphasis on choosing the correct model from the past to govern the present. The quotation praises King Wen as the paradigm to emulate – a paradigm fully manifest not in some general historical knowledge but in the very *Ode* that bears his name (“Wen wang” 文王 [King Wen]). The memory of King Wen (the model ruler) is embodied in “King Wen” (the *Ode*). As a whole, through its sequence of topical reference (“Zi yi” and “Xiang bo”) and direct quotation (“Wen wang”), the first paragraph of the “Zi yi” manuscript version establishes the *Odes* – and only the *Odes* – as the ultimate proof text from where to deduct exemplary rulership. As “King Wen” (the text) embodies the virtue of King Wen (the sage ruler), the *Odes* corpus in its totality embodies the repertoire of paradigms of morality and sagacity. From here, the manuscript version of “Zi yi” unfolds around a sequence of quotations primarily from the ancient *Odes*, supported by what appear as auxiliary *Documents* quotations. In the manuscripts, only the two sections corresponding to *Li ji* paragraphs 13 and 14 close with *Documents* quotations without a preceding passage from the *Odes*.

The overall prominence of the *Odes* in the “Zi yi” reflects their unique status as a canonical text of distinct scope during the late Warring States period. No other text is quoted nearly as often in the transmitted literature of the time, and none is given a stronger presence in excavated manuscripts. What is more, the *Odes* quotations found across different manuscripts display a remarkable textual stability of the canon: with the single exception of the one “lost *Ode*” in

the “Zi yi”, all *Odes* quotations – a total of fifty-six quotations from twenty-nine recognizable songs – match passages in the received anthology.³³ Comparing these fifty-six quotations both among the various manuscripts and with the received Mao anthology of the *Odes*, their numerous textual differences – ranging from 31.6 to 42.7 per cent of all characters – are almost entirely limited to graphic (as opposed to lexical) variants. In other words, we witness the combination of profound phonological (and most likely also largely lexical) stability with pervasive graphic flexibility/instability.³⁴ While the overall graphic stability of *Odes* quotations across a broad range of transmitted texts from the late Warring States and early imperial periods undoubtedly reflects a thorough retrospective standardization according to the received Mao recension that became dominant only toward the end of the Eastern Han, the actual words were evidently stable already at the time of our earliest manuscript evidence, and probably even before.

The *Documents* quotations do not show the same lexical stability. Between the *Li ji* and the manuscript versions, their quotations differ in the number of characters as well as in the actual words. It is furthermore clear that the anthology of the *Documents* as it was defined by the late third century BCE differed from the range of *Documents* texts that in 300 BCE, a mere two or three generations earlier, was quoted as authoritative. Compared to the *Documents*, the *Odes* at the time of the Guodian tomb were more coherently defined as a textual

33 Kern 2003: 33–35. In this count, I include the five manuscripts that quote from the *Odes*: the “Wu xing” 五行 silk manuscript from Mawangdui 馬王堆 (Changsha 長沙, Hunan) tomb no. 3 (sealed 168 BCE; Ikeda 1993); the “Wu xing” bamboo manuscript from Guodian (Jingmen 荊門, Hubei;) tomb no. 1 (sealed ca. 300 BCE; Jingmen shi bowuguan 1998: 29–35, 147–154); the “Ziyi” bamboo manuscripts from Guodian tomb no. 1; the “Zi yi” bamboo manuscript in the corpus of the Shanghai Museum texts (probably close in time to those from Guodian); and the “Kongzi shi lun” 孔子詩論 (Ma Chengyuan 2001: 3–4, 11–41, 119–168) bamboo manuscript from the Shanghai Museum corpus. I also include the three *Odes* quotations in the Shanghai Museum manuscript “Min zhi fumu” 民之父母 (Ma Chengyuan 2002: 154, 166) that was not yet published when I computed my earlier survey. On the other hand, I exclude the badly damaged bamboo manuscript from Shuanggudui 雙古堆 (Fuyang 阜陽, Anhui; tomb sealed 165 BCE; Hu Pingshen and Han Ziqiang 1988) that represents a (already in the original?) fragmentary version of the anthology itself (and matches its songs in every case).

34 As argued in Kern forthcoming 2005, it would be counterintuitive to assume that the graphic variants – variants that were homophonous or near-homophonous and thus could be used as loan characters to write the same words in different ways – were at any major number lexical in nature.

corpus, and their individual texts were better guarded against lexical change. One reason for the latter was likely the presence of rhyme, tetrasyllabic meter, and other euphonic features that rendered the *Odes* eminently memorable and less dependent on the technology of writing. If anything, their combination of graphic variation and lexical stability points to a strong oral element in their synchronic circulation and diachronic transmission.³⁵ The evidence from the “Zi yi” and other early manuscripts indicates that the poetic structure of the *Odes* was of major significance for the stability and continuity of this canon and the way it was quoted.³⁶ Whether or not the *Documents* were mainly transmitted in written form – something that has been rightly doubted despite their designation as *shu* 書 (“writings”)³⁷ – they did not, on the whole, possess the same regularity of poetic structure of the *Odes*.

3. Related observations on other Guodian, Mawangdui, and Shanghai Museum manuscripts

Explicit quotation is not a general phenomenon in excavated manuscripts but rather the exception, and no other manuscript is as intensely and systematically organized around a series of quotations as the “Zi yi”.³⁸ However, among the Guodian and Shanghai Museum manuscripts there are several others that include explicit quotation. To begin with Guodian, the “Wu xing” manuscript includes seven *Odes* quotations (but none from other texts). The Mawangdui “Wu xing” manuscript includes all quotations found in the earlier Guodian text and in

35 As argued in Kern 2003 and Kern forthcoming 2005.

36 It would be faulty to ascribe the more faithful transmission of the *Odes* just to their stronger canonical status, and to claim that they were mainly transmitted in writing as well. The high degree of graphic variation in the manuscripts – and the overall absence of “copyists’ errors” – speaks against a mechanical process of manuscript copying; see Kern 2003, Kern 2002.

37 Schaberg 2001: 66–80. The stronger rhythmic coherence that distinguishes certain *Documents* quotations in the “Zi yi” manuscripts from their counterpart in the *Li ji* may well be taken as an additional indication of an oral dimension of their transmission.

38 Note that the “Zi yi” also stands out among the texts of the received tradition, including the related *Li ji* chapters “Fang ji” and “Biao ji” that also begin each paragraph with “the master said”. The “Zi yi” includes more quotations in absolute terms (thirty-eight versus twenty-two in the “Fang ji” and twenty-four in the “Biao ji”) while being significantly shorter than the other two chapters. The “Fang ji” comprises thirty-eight paragraphs and the “Biao ji” fifty-four; and especially the “Biao ji” contains a series of very long paragraphs.

addition quotes “Guan ju” 關雎 (Mao 1), expands several of the Guodian *Odes* quotations significantly, and repeats a number of them in an additional discussion. As in the “Zi yi” manuscripts, most *Odes* quotations in the Guodian and Shanghai Museum manuscripts are very short (normally a couplet of two tetrasyllabic lines). In the Guodian and Shanghai Museum “Ziyi” texts, we have only one instance of three lines and two more of four lines; in the Guodian “Wu xing” text, we have one of three lines. None of the quotations in the Shanghai Museum “Kongzi shilun” manuscript exceeds two lines. By contrast, the early second century BCE Mawangdui “Wu xing” manuscript – postdating the Guodian and Shanghai Museum texts by at least a full century – includes individual quotations comprising four, five, or six lines of a song.³⁹ This is related to the overall structure of the two versions: As is well known, the Mawangdui text is divided into a “*jing* 經 (canon) / *shuo* 說 (exposition)” structure known also from other early texts, where a shorter canonical core is elaborated upon in separate explanatory sections.⁴⁰ While this particular structure may account for the differences in quotation patterns between the two “Wu xing” versions, it corresponds with the observation that for the “Zi yi” the probably later format of the *Li ji* admitted longer quotations than the early manuscripts.

Another difference between the two “Wu xing” versions is the way in which the *Odes* quotations are integrated with their surrounding text: in the Guodian text, they are embedded in the philosophical argument without being introduced as quotations, while the Mawangdui manuscript uses the formula *shi yue* 詩曰 (“an *Ode* says”).⁴¹ But this does not render the Guodian quotations unmarked. On the other hand, the Guodian “Wu xing” has all but two of its *Odes* quotations followed by the formula *ci zhi wei ye* 此之謂也, “[the *Ode*] gives expression to this [i.e., the argument preceding the quotation]”, a pattern that – in connection with *Odes* quotations – is familiar from the received *Mengzi* 孟子 and half a dozen *Li ji* chapters.⁴² Four of the five instances of this pattern appear at the end of a paragraph, closing it formally; the fifth instance appears in the middle of a paragraph. The two unmarked quotations both appear at the beginning of a paragraph. What distinguishes the postponed “gives expression to this” from the introductory “an *Ode* says” is that the former renders the function of these quotations explicit: the quoted text brings the argument to the point. In this

39 For the full discussion, see Kern forthcoming 2005.

40 Ikeda 1993, Pang Pu 2000.

41 Note the difference to the *shi yun* formula in the “Zi yi” manuscripts.

42 See chapters “Li qi” 禮器, “Ji yi” 祭義, “Yue ji” 樂記, “Xue ji” 學記, “Jing jie” 經解, and “Sangfu si zhi” 喪服四制.

rhetorical gesture, it is not the ancient *Ode* but the new argument that is given explanation and confirmation. The *Ode* itself, it is intimated, does not require explanation. The same, of course, is also implied in the mere “an *Ode* says”: here as well, the *Ode* is invoked as proof text. Strictly speaking, *shi yue* and *ci zhi wei ye* are the two halves of the complete quotation frame as it occasionally appears in received texts: “[When] an *Ode* says [quotation], it gives expression to this [the preceding argument].” Whether a text uses either the first or the second half of this frame, the other half is always implied.

Apparently the only other text from Guodian where quotation explicitly plays a role is “Cheng zhi wen zhi” 成之聞之.⁴³ The first instance on slip 6 might not be a quotation at all but a rhetorical device: the text uses the phrase *xizhe junzi you yan yue* 昔者君子有言曰 (“in the past, a gentleman had an expression that says:”) to introduce a brief, proverb-like statement of otherwise unknown origin; the same introductory formula is then again used on slip 37. On slips 7 and 8, the manuscript contains some brief parallel phrasing to the “Ji tong” 祭統 and “Biao ji” chapters of the received *Li ji*. But perhaps more importantly, the text includes five instances of *Documents* quotations, some of them overlapping with the received “modern script” *Documents*.⁴⁴ Four of the five quotations are followed by the question “How?” (or “Why?”): and all five continue with a brief explanation of the quoted text, producing a rhetorical structure reminiscent of the exegetical practice of the Gongyang 公羊 tradition of the *Spring and Autumn Annals* (*Chunqiu* 春秋). On slips 22–23 and 29–30, this pattern further leads to a statement introduced by the well-known formula “the gentleman said” (*junzi yue* 君子曰).⁴⁵ On slip 30, this additional quotation is then again followed by “Why” and another explanation, and the same pattern of rhetorical question and brief response also follows the *xizhe junzi you yan yue* 昔者君子有言曰 quotation on slip 37. Finally, another instance of “the

43 Jingmen shi bowuguan 1998: 47–52, 165–170. In addition, there is one other explicit quotation toward the end (slips 27–28) of the manuscript “Tang Yu zhi dao” 唐虞之道 (Jingmen shi bowuguan 1998: 41, 158); however, it is obscure in both its title and its textual boundaries.

44 The “Jun Shi” 君奭 chapter is quoted on slips 22 and 29, the “Kang gao” 康誥 chapter on slips 38–39. One other quote of five characters is attributed to Yu the Great 大禹 (slip 33), and yet another four characters are quoted from what looks like a binomial *Documents* chapter title ending with the word “charge” 命 (slip 25).

45 The brief Shanghai Museum text “Xizhe jun lao” 昔者君老 (Ma Chengyuan 2002: 85–90, 239–246) also twice uses the formula *junzi yue*. The formula is well-known in the received literature, appearing, for example, in *Zuo zhuan* 左傳 as well as in several *Li ji* chapters.

gentleman said” appears on slip 36, this time without connection to another quotation and also not followed by the rhetorical question-answer pattern.

This exegetical style of the “Cheng zhi wen zhi” manuscript is indicative of a repertoire of *Documents* and other speeches endowed with particular authority. It draws on these texts not as self-explanatory proof texts but through the classical commentary formula: a canonical text is first recognized and then explained. In other words, “Cheng zhi wen zhi” assumes the gesture of commentary or “tradition” (*zhuan* 傳). It also integrates the quotations tightly with the actual argument; they probably could not have been shifted between different sections in the way the *Odes* quotations in “Zi yi” appear to have been somewhat movable.

In the Shanghai Museum corpus available to me so far,⁴⁶ in addition to the “Zi yi” and the “Kongzi shilun” 孔子詩論 – a text devoted to the discussion of the *Odes*, and not quoting them in a separate expository argument – there is one other text that contains quotation,⁴⁷ “Min zhi fumu” 民之父母. This text is parallel to most of the “Lun li” 論禮 chapter in *Kongzi jiayu* 孔子家語 and to, roughly, the first half of the *Li ji* chapter “Kongzi xian ju” 孔子閒居.⁴⁸ The

46 Ma Chengyuan 2001 and 2002. Volume Three of the series has been published but so far has not been available to me (as of today, September 27, 2004, full six months after its publication in March 2004, neither RLIN nor OCLC provide a listing for the volume). At the conference “Confucianism Resurrected: The Third International Conference on Excavated Chinese Manuscripts” (Mount Holyoke College, April 23–25, 2004), Li Chaoyuan 李朝遠 provided a preview of the contents of Volume Four. According to this presentation, the material includes a manuscript titled (by the modern editors) “Cai feng qu mu” 采風曲目 that carries one reference to the *Ode* “Shuo ren” 碩人 (Mao 57) and a number of other song titles unattested in the received tradition. Another manuscript “Yi shi” 逸詩 contains two *Odes*-style songs, neither one of which has been known from the tradition. Finally, the manuscript “Nei li” 內禮 is said to be related to the *Da Dai Li ji* 大戴禮記 chapter “Zengzi li xiao” 曾子立孝 and the *Li ji* chapter “Nei ze” 內則; see Xing Wen 2004.

47 Here, I do not consider the long, if fragmentary, manuscript “Rong cheng shi” 容成氏 that includes four passages of direct speech and dialogue attributed to several ancient culture heroes on slips 9–10, 46–50, and 53; see Ma Chengyuan 2002: 101–102, 138–142, 145, 257–258, 286–290, 292. These are not quotations in the sense of referring to other texts.

48 Ma Chengyuan 2002: 15–30, 149–180; *Li ji zhengyi* 51.388c–389b; *Kongzi jiayu* 6.17b–19a. In the *Li ji* chapter, the section corresponding to “Min zhi fumu” is then followed by another one (taking up almost half of the “Kongzi xian ju”) that includes four more quotations; the *Kongzi jiayu* “Lun li” contains only a fragment of this. To my mind, this second section of the received *Li ji* chapter may originally have been a separate text (possibly even of a composite nature itself, just as “Min zhi fumu” may be a composite text). In other words, I

starting point of “Min zhi fumu” is a question regarding a couplet from the *Ode* “Jiong zhao” 訶酌 (Mao 251), posed by the disciple Zixia 子夏 to Confucius: How does a sovereign need to be in order to be called “the father and mother of the people” (*min zhi fumu*)?⁴⁹ From here, the text develops in five steps Confucius’s discussion of song, ritual, and music that leads up to a statement on the “three phenomena of non-existence” (*san wu* 三無): “music without sound” (*wu sheng zhi yue* 無聲之樂), “ritual without form” (*wu ti zhi li* 無體之禮), and “mourning without garb” (*wu fu zhi sang* 無服之喪). Confucius is further prompted to first provide couplets from the *Odes* to match each of the three phenomena⁵⁰ before concluding the argument with a passage of five rhymed sections for further illustration. Each of the five sections consists of three couplets – twenty-four characters total – that rhyme with the even-numbered lines. While not a quotation from the *Odes*, these sections show the standard poetic features of *Odes* poetry: tetrasyllabic lines, the use of end-rhyme, and reduplicatives. In the manuscript version – though not in the received *Li ji* and *Kongzi jiayu* texts – the third of these sections closes with a reference to “the father and mother of the people”, thus bringing the text full circle by referring back to the initial *Odes* quotation from “Jiong zhao”. The following synopsis compares this section between the manuscript and the *Li ji* version, with the rhymes marked:⁵¹

consider the manuscript text to be complete on its own terms, and not originally part of the longer text that we have in the *Li ji*.

- 49 Unlike the *Li ji* and the *Kongzi jiayu* versions, “Min zhi fumu” does not begin with an introductory phrase on the setting of the dialogue between Zixia and Confucius before coming to Zixia’s quotation of “Jiong zhao”. (Here, I assume that at the beginning of the text, only the first character *zi* 子 is broken off the top of the first slip, which seems likely when compared to the length of slips 5, 7, and 8 – the three longest ones, with only slip 5 being complete at the top – of the same manuscript.)
- 50 Beginning on slip 8, the text quotes a couplet from “Hao tian you cheng ming” 昊天有成命 (Mao 271) and the first half of a couplet from “Bo zhou” 柏舟 (Mao 26). The upper part of slip 9, however, is broken off; it almost certainly included the second line from “Bo zhou” as well as another couplet from “Gu feng” 谷風 (Mao 35). Note that in the case of “Hao tian you cheng ming” the received versions quote only a line while “Min zhi fumu” quotes the couplet.
- 51 Ma Chengyuan 2002: 28, 172–173; *Li ji zhengyi* 51.389b. Due to a different sequential order among the sections, section three of the manuscript corresponds to section five of the *Li ji* text. Altogether, the sections 1–2–3–4–5 of “Min zhi fumu” correspond to sections 1–4–5–2–3 in the *Li ji*; the *Kongzi jiayu* includes only sections 1 and 5 of “Min zhi fumu” (1 and 3 of the *Li ji*).

“Min zhi fumu” Section 3	<i>Li ji</i> “Kongzi xian ju” Section 5
無聲之樂, 施及孫子。	無聲之樂, 氣志既起。
In music without sound, [the ruler’s influence] extends to generations of grandsons.	In music without sound, spirit and will are raised.
無體之禮, 塞于四海。	無體之禮, 施及四海。
In ritual without form, [the ruler’s influence] permeates the lands within the four seas.	In ritual without form, [the ruler’s influence] extends across the lands within the four seas.
無服之喪, 爲民父母。	無服之喪, 施於孫子。
In mourning without garb, [the ruler] becomes the father and mother of the people.	In mourning without garb, [the ruler’s influence] extends to generations of grandsons.

On the whole, “Min zhi fumu” and its counterparts in *Li ji* and *Kongzi jiayu* display a number of textual differences including additional phrases and grammatical particles as well as graphic and lexical variants. Taken together, these differences go beyond what could be explained as an inadvertent confusion of textual order.⁵² What makes the section under discussion unique and particularly interesting, is that its lexical variants even extend to the rhyme words. This feature provides the strongest evidence that the differences between the two versions are either the result of conscious compositional choice (with a later editor changing an earlier text) or represent two distinct textual traditions. Whatever the case, the lexical differences remain strictly within the fixed formal framework of the text. As each of the five sections is marked by its own definite rhyme category, the present section retains its perfectly regular *zhi* 之 (*-ə) rhyme despite the two entirely different lines “becomes the father and mother of the people” versus “spirit and will are raised”.⁵³ Several major differences in Section 2 of “Min zhi fumu”, corresponding to Section 4 of “Kongzi xianju”, confirm the impression of lexical change within formal stability:

- 52 With its twenty-four characters per section, this part of “Min zhi fumu” and its different order in the *Li ji* would fall precisely under Shaughnessy’s model that a later editor, when arranging the received text, was working from a bunch of individual bamboo slips that were no longer held together by chords and thus had lost their original order. Note that as in the case of the “Zi yi”, scholars have pointed out that the manuscript order is superior to that of the received text, thus implying some kind of deterioration or accident in the cause of early transmission. However, see note 22 above for my critique of Shaughnessy’s hypothesis.
- 53 The rhyme words in the two versions are: *zi* 子 (*tsjəʔ), *hai* 海 (*hməʔ), *mu* 母 (*məʔ) in “Min zhi fumu” and *qi* 起 (khjəʔ), *hai* 海 (hməʔ), *zi* 子 (tsjəʔ) in *Li ji* “Kongzi xian ju” (in the phonetic reconstruction of Schuessler 1987).

“Min zhi fumu” Section 2	<i>Li ji</i> “Kongzi xian ju” Section 4
無聲之樂, 塞于四[方].	無聲之樂, 日聞四[方].
In music without sound, [the ruler’s influence] fills the four quarters.	In music without sound, [the ruler’s influence] is perceived across the four quarters with each day.
無體之禮, 日逮月[相].	無體之禮, 日就月[將].
In ritual without form, [the ruler’s influence] unites with each day and leads together with each month.	In ritual without form, [the ruler’s influence] progresses with each day and advances with each month.
無服之喪, 純德同[明].	無服之喪, 純德孔[明].
In mourning without garb, pure virtue is collectively shining.	In mourning without garb, pure virtue is greatly shining.

Of the variants in this section, only *xiang* 相 (*sjaŋ) / *jiang* 將 (*tsjaŋ), having homorganic initials and sharing the same rhyme category, would a priori qualify as graphic rather than lexical variants. It is nevertheless interesting that the two lexical variants *qiu* 逌 (*gjəw) / *jiu* 就 (*dzjəwh) and *kong* 孔 (*khunʔ) / *tong* 同 (*duŋ) both differ only in their initials while sharing the same rhyme categories. This again indicates an overall concern with form (aural proximity) that transcends genuine lexical differences. To some extent, this observation further applies to the “Lun li” chapter in *Kongzi jiayu* that in its Section 2 corresponds to “Min zhi fumu” Section 5 and *Li ji* “Kongzi xian ju” Section 3:

“Min zhi fumu” Section 5	<i>Li ji</i> “Kongzi xian ju” Section 3	<i>Kongzi jiayu</i> “Lun li” Section 2
無聲之樂, 氣志既[從].	無聲之樂, 氣志既[從].	無聲之樂, 所願必[從].
In music without sound, spirit and will are following.	In music without sound, spirit and will are following.	In music without sound, what is desired must be followed.
無體之禮, 上下和[同].	無體之禮, 上下和[同].	無體之禮, 上下和[同].
In ritual without form, above and below are harmoniously united.	In ritual without form, above and below are harmoniously united.	In ritual without form, above and below are harmoniously united.
無服之喪, 以畜萬[邦].	無服之喪, 以畜萬[邦].	無服之喪, 施及萬[邦].
In mourning without garb, [the ruler’s influence] nourishes the ten-thousand states.	In mourning without garb, [the ruler’s influence] nourishes the ten-thousand states.	In mourning without garb, [the ruler’s influence] extends to the ten-thousand states.

The first and the third couplet both show clear lexical differences between “Min zhi fumu” and *Li ji* on the one side, and *Kongzi jiayu* on the other. Yet despite

these differences in syntax and meaning, the two versions still maintain the same rhyme-words in these lines, that is, *cong* 從 and *bang* 邦.

In sum, “Min zhi fumu”, when considered against its received counterparts, is noteworthy in at least three respects: first, it is more clearly focused on the *Ode* “Jiong zhuo” than the other two texts by (a) raising it at the very outset and (b) referring back to it in Section 3 of the final rhymed passage. The two references are thus positioned as the frame of the entire text. By contrast, the received versions do not include the second reference, nor do the *Li ji* and *Kongzi jiayu* chapters actually end with the rhymed passage in five sections.⁵⁴ Second, in its quotation of “Hao tian you cheng ming”, the manuscript quotes a couplet – the standard format of an *Odes* quotation – where the received versions only quote a line. Third, the final passage, comprised of *Odes*-like couplets, shows the stability of poetic form even across a series of lexical changes.

4. Tentative Conclusions

Among the various manuscripts from Guodian and the Shanghai Museum corpus, there are only a few for which we can document a history of transmission into later periods: a version of the *Zhou Yi* 周易 (which I have not seen yet) in the Shanghai Museum material has continued into the received *Zhou Yi*; the proto-*Laozi* 老子 from Guodian has continued into the received *Laozi* (and, on the way, the Mawangdui manuscript *Laozi*); the Guodian “Wu xing” has continued into the Mawangdui “Wu xing”; the Guodian and Shanghai Museum “Zi yi” version has continued into the received *Li ji* “Zi yi”; and the Shanghai Museum “Min zhi fumu” has continued into both the *Kongzi jiayu* “Lun li” and the *Li ji* “Kongzi xianju”.⁵⁵ Without presuming the clear distinction between “Daoist” and “Confucian” texts that Han scholars retrospectively imagined, it seems to me that the *Zhou Yi* and *Laozi* texts should be distinguished from the other four by their cosmological thought that probably also made them relevant to a different range of intellectual lineages. (Like other scholars, I consider it no accident that in the Guodian corpus, the *Laozi* C manuscript shares the same

54 In the manuscript, the end of the text is marked by an “L”-shaped black hook.

55 I cannot yet include the still unpublished “Nei li” manuscript from the Shanghai Museum corpus that reportedly relates to the *Da Dai Li ji* “Zengzi li xiao” and the *Li ji* “Nei ze”. One needs to see the manuscript text in order to determine the extent to which it may have continued into the latter two.

physical format as the cosmogenic “Taiyi sheng shui” 太一生水 manuscript and was possibly combined with it as a single text.) Aside from *Zhou Yi* and *Laozi*, the only three Guodian and Shanghai Museum manuscripts for which we can document a later history of transmission are exactly the ones that include quotations from the *Odes*. As argued in detail above, both the “Zi yi” manuscripts and “Min zhi fumu” are appreciably more tightly connected to the *Odes* than their – by all accounts presumably later – received versions. In both cases, the *Odes* are presented as embodying the model of perfect rulership. When in “Min zhi fumu” Confucius speaks about the “three phenomena of non-existence”, Zixia in fact asks: “Which of the *Odes* relate to them?” (*he shi jin zhi* 何詩近之), prompting the master to the quotation of specific couplets. In other words, it is the text of the *Odes* – just as in the “Zi yi” quotation of “King Wen” – that contained the sagely model and allowed it to remain constantly present.

By contrast, we do not know what happened to “Cheng zhi wen zhi”, the text that includes only *Documents* quotations and presents them in an exegetical framework. In considering these observations, however, one needs to keep in mind that they are based on a small sample of excavated texts derived from probably only two locations. Moreover, these sites were close to each other both chronologically and geographically and may have belonged to the same intellectual community. What this limited evidence suggests is that if a text was closely organized around references to the *Odes*, it enjoyed a greater prospect of transmission. The same cannot be said about texts built around *Documents* quotations. This is not to argue that texts of the latter type were not transmitted. After all, by the late third century BCE, there was a canonical *Documents* anthology in place, and there are texts like the *Li ji* chapter “Xue ji” 學記 that include a string of *Documents* quotations but none from the *Odes*. Moreover, there are numerous transmitted texts from early China that do not include any quotations. One can argue, however, that the use of *Odes* quotations may have raised the odds of extended synchronic circulation and, finally, diachronic transmission.

One aspect that binds together the *Odes* and the texts in which they are cited, and that lends coherence and durability to both, is the power of poetic form. The statement in the received *Documents* that “poetry expresses intent, and song makes words last long” (*shi yan zhi, ge yong yan* 詩言志, 歌永言),⁵⁶

56 *Shangshu zhengyi* 3.19c; see also the Tang commentary there for the double understanding of *yong* 永 as “to chant” (*yong* 詠) as well as “to make last long”.

pronounced in a discussion of music and referring to both the particular mode of poetic utterances and the longevity of their memory, is not trivial. It is also not trivial that the statement is attributed to the ancient model ruler Shun 舜, and that it is contained in the first chapter – “Yao dian” 堯典 – of the *Documents*, a chapter for which a late Warring States (or Qin imperial) date of redaction, if not actual composition, has been firmly established.⁵⁷ All three early manuscripts that contain quotations from the *Odes* – “Zi yi”, “Wu xing”, and “Min zhi fumu” – are themselves constructed in extremely formulaic rhythms. In “Zi yi”, this is reflected in the consistent framework of the master’s saying, capped by the quotation; “Wu xing” is organized in a spiraling, mantra-like progression of rhythmic statements regarding the “five modes of proper conduct” (*wu xing*); “Min zhi fumu” is likewise based on numerology – the “five attainments” (*wu zhi* 五至), the “three phenomena of non-existence”, and the “five raisings” (*wu qi* 五起) – and culminates in the poetic diction (of the *wu qi*) discussed above.

Such formulaic devices cast meaning into a definite form and contribute to textual stability and continuity even at moments of lexical change. They are structurally similar to the guarded form of an *Odes* quotation (by comparison, a *Documents* line that underwent similar lexical change was not formally restrained to retain its original diction). What protected both poetic lines and other tightly formulaic expressions from disintegration was not merely their own individual form but, most importantly, the adherence of this form to a sequence of other expressions of exactly the same form. Surely, there also were other important factors to generate textual stability in early China. But it remains worth noting that a change in meter or rhyme of a single poetic line would have thrown the entire song off balance; a change in the formulaic structure of a “Wu xing” and “Min zhi fumu” phrase would have upset the inner logic of the entire argument. In both cases, the integrity of the text as a whole was hinging on the repetitive, circular consistency of all of its parts. The same is true on the macro-level of a “Zi yi” paragraph: within the paragraph, the sequence of the individual parts is fixed. Needless to say, such poetic diction – if I now may use the word in its broadest sense to refer to a particular mode of aesthetically organized, intensified speech (or “language under stress”) – is fundamentally a phenomenon of oral utterance and reception. This is not to say that texts like “Wu xing”,

57 The passage is in the “Yao dian” chapter of the “modern text” *Shangshu*; in the corrupt “ancient text” version, the chapter is divided into two, “Yao dian” and “Shun dian” 舜典, and the passage under discussion is found in the latter. For scholarship regarding the date of the “Yao dian”, see Kanaya 1992: 353–374; Jiang Shanguo 1988: 140–168, 272–273; Chen Mengjia 1985: 135–146.

“Zi yi”, or “Min zhi fumu” were circulating only in oral form; but it does mean that even with written versions available, or readily prepared, the requirement and practice of recitation and memorization was part of the very identity of these texts. Moreover, it means that the poetic form of oral diction exerted considerable force on the philosophical argument proper: As the texts under discussion amply show, the particular patterns of syntactical and rhythmic structure were inextricably interlocked with the logic in which the argument was able to unfold. And finally, even in an early culture replete with manuscript writing (something we may assume only with some caution), the practice of recitation and memorization that is inscribed into the textual structure must also have ruled into the processes of circulation and transmission, engendering both formal continuity and a general lexical stability.⁵⁸

The second element that I believe contributed to the continuous presence, and hence history of transmission, of “Min zhi fumu”, “Zi yi”, and “Wu xing” is that texts closely related to the *Odes* perform the very gesture of commemoration and emulation of a past model that the *Odes* themselves were thought to embody. As the *Odes* revered the models of antiquity, their quotation both venerated and emulated them as the models of such reverence. It is not mere coincidence that the large majority of *Odes* quotations in Warring States texts – including manuscripts – come from the *ya* 雅 and *song* 頌 hymns that are fundamentally commemorative in nature. More than the use of other sources, a quotation from the *Odes* referred back to the origins of Zhou dynastic rulership and served the true purpose of Warring States *ru* learning, that is, to search for orientation from the past and to offer guidance on how to apply the ancient models to present rulership. To organize a text around *Odes* quotations meant to firmly connect it to the textual lineage of the *Odes* and hence to continue their model of dignified and formalized commemoration. It also meant to endow the text with a voice of unquestioned authority.

In Warring States philosophical texts, the force of poetic expression, the gesture of commemoration, and the invocation of traditional authority all fortified a text against random disintegration and disappearance. Yet, it should also be noted that neither “Zi yi” nor “Min zhi fumu” offered a particular exegetical approach to the *Odes*. They did not interpret the *Odes* but presented them as self-evident and authoritative. It is not philosophical expository prose illustrating and explaining an *Ode*; it is the *Ode* clarifying and confirming the argument. This distinguishes “Zi yi” and “Min zhi fumu” from both the Mawangdui “Wu xing”

58 See also my arguments in Kern 2002, Kern 2003.

– compared to the earlier Guodian “Wu xing” the more developed version of that text – and the Shanghai Museum “Kongzi shilun” 孔子詩論. The latter two did not just present the *Odes* as a general model to follow; instead, both submit the ancient songs to a specific, and explicit mode of interpretation. This mode enjoyed wide recognition during the third and second centuries BCE, as can be shown – now that the two manuscripts have sharpened our eyes for it – from evidence scattered over a number of received texts.⁵⁹ However, during the second half of the first century BCE, the exegesis developed in “Wu xing” and “Kongzi shilun” gradually lost its status to become overshadowed first by the *san jia* 三家 (“three exegetical lineages”) and, finally, Mao 毛 traditions. The latter, which was officially canonized only under Emperor Ping 平 (1 BCE–6 CE), gained in eminence over the following two centuries and by the end of the Eastern Han period had largely eclipsed all competing approaches to the *Odes*. It was perhaps this historical development that put an end to the circulation and transmission of the “Wu xing” and “Kongzi shi lun” texts. As certainly the “Kongzi shi lun”, and to a considerable degree also the “Wu xing” *jing/shuo* version as we have it from Mawangdui, owed much of their earlier prestige and circulation not merely to the quotation of the *Odes* but to their powerful explanation, both texts must have fallen into disgrace, or perhaps simple oblivion, once this explanation ceased to be widely accepted. Under the new dominance of the Mao commentary, defined and cemented by works like Xu Shen’s 許慎 (c. 55–c. 149) *Shuowen jiezi* 說文解字⁶⁰ and Zheng Xuan’s 鄭玄 (127–200) *Mao Shi zhuan jian* 毛詩傳箋, the exegetical mode of “Wu xing” and “Kongzi shi lun” was left behind. By contrast, texts like “Zi yi” and “Min zhi fumu” used the *Odes* in terms that were general and flexible enough to be easily adaptable to the new interpretation. In Han times, both texts were incorporated into the *Li ji*, while “Wu xing” and “Kongzi shi lun” disappeared above ground.

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59 Kern 2003, 2003a.

60 Here, I am thinking of the numerous *Odes* quotations in Xu Shen’s dictionary that use the Mao reading in individual character glosses.

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