

Materials on Korean Studies

A Traditional Joseon Primer:  
*Essential Instructions on Breaking Folly*  
(*Gyeongmong yogyeol*) by Yi I,  
Chapters 1-5

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## A Note on Translation

This translation is based on the 1814 edition of the Yulgok jeonseo 栗谷全書 held by the Yonsei University Central Library.

### Romanization

- All Romanization, except proper names, will be provided in *italics*.
- The Romanization of Korean terms follows the Revised Romanization of Korean system. Exceptions have been made for the names of people and places that already have a widely accepted spelling in English-speaking countries. Chinese terms have been Romanized in pinyin.
- Romanizations of literary Sinitic words will depend on the author's country of origin (i.e. the words of a Joseon writer will be Romanized as Korean words.)
- Proper names will be Romanized according to the person's country of origin.
- In ambiguous cases, such as literary Sinitic words in classical texts, the Korean Romanization will be listed first, followed by the Chinese, where relevant. In cases where it makes sense to Romanize in a different order, the change is indicated. If there is no indication, the Romanization reflects a Korean reading (e.g. *gyeong/jing* 敬, but C. *jing*/K. *gyeong*).

### Use of Sinographs, Translation, and Romanization

- Sinographs, or Chinese characters, will be provided for the sake of clarity.
- All proper names will be provided in Chinese, where relevant.
- For clarity, the sinographs of translated official titles will be provided in the footnotes, along with Romanization.
- All translations from Chinese are my own unless otherwise indicated.

### Citations

- Chicago Style will be used for all sources. Exceptions to the style will be made for reprints (both printed and digital) of pre-nineteenth century Korean and Chinese texts and for original editions.
- Pre-modern Chinese texts and their translations mostly will be cited from three online open-access digital libraries: the Chinese Text Project (<https://ctext.org/>), Dongyang gojeon jonghap DB 東洋古典綜合 (<http://db.cyberseodang.or.kr/front/main/main.do>), Hanguk gojeon jonghap DB 韓國古典綜合 (<http://db.itkc.or.kr/>), and Hanguksa database 韓國史데이터베이스 (<http://www.kci.go.kr>)

[db.history.go.kr/](http://db.history.go.kr/)).

- References to passages in the Chinese Classics will be in the form x.x, where the first number refers to the fascicle (*gwon/juan* 卷) and the second to the passage number within the fascicle.
- The fascicle number of all such texts will be provided in Arabic numerals as “Injo sillok 21” to indicate *gwon/juan* 21 of *Injo sillok* 仁祖實錄.
- The *Veritable Records of the Joseon Dynasty* (*Joseon wangjo sillok* 朝鮮王朝實錄) will be cited according to fascicle and date followed by the entry number (i.e. *Injo sillok* 21, Year 7, Month 10, Day 17, Entry 3.) The entry number reflects the organization of individual daily records in the *Annals of the Joseon Dynasty* (online edition <http://sillok.history.go.kr/>).

### Punctuation

- Brackets are used when the author's notes have been added to the Chinese text. However, parentheses are used to indicate notes in the English translation.
- Brackets are used when English has been added by the translator for clarification and when dates have been rendered in their Western equivalents.

### Other Matters

- Regarding the expression of age, the traditional means of counting age (*selsui* 歲) have been applied. A person is one *se* at birth and becomes two *se* on New Year's Day. Therefore, an approximation of a person's age according to modern custom can be derived by subtracting at least one and sometimes almost two years.
- Regarding point of view, the male third-person pronoun is often used when referring to the practitioner of this book because it was composed mainly for men.
- The term “courtesy name” is used for *ja* 字 and “alternative name” for *ho* 號.
- All dates are given according to the lunar calendar as used in original texts.
- The footnotes are consecutive throughout Introduction, Translation, and Appendix.

## Introduction<sup>1</sup>

### *The Text and Translations*

#### The purpose of the present translation

*Gyeongmong yogyeol* (*Essential Instructions on Breaking Folly* 擊蒙要訣),<sup>2</sup> written in 1577 by Yi I 李珥 (1536-1584), is a moral primer for those beginning their studies (*chohak* 初學)<sup>3</sup> as well as a manual for the private performance of two standard Korean rituals: funerals and sacrificial rites. It was among the best-known primers of the Joseon dynasty.

In 1629 King Injo (1623-1649) ordered the nationwide distribution of the book,<sup>4</sup> and the instruction was carried out two months later.<sup>5</sup> It was also used to educate the crown prince in the palace. In 1788, King Jeongjo said that he had read the book at age seven and learned a lot from it.<sup>6</sup> In 1894 the French bibliographer Maurice Courant, secretary to the French legation in Joseon, included it in the *Bibliographie Coréenne* and classified it as an educational text.<sup>7</sup>

1. The introduction and translation is an abridged and modified version of my master's thesis (Na 2019a).
2. "Breaking folly" (*gyeongmongjimeng* 擊蒙) is found in the nine at the top 上九 in hexagram 40, *meng* 蒙 of the *Yijing*; Wilhelm 1967, 587: "In punishing folly it does not further one to commit transgressions" 擊蒙, 不利爲寇. Wilhelm's rendering of *ji* 擊 has a punitive sense, a negatively limited meaning, and so does not convey the connotation found in *Gyeongmong yogyeol*. I translated it as "breaking," for it could positively mean "awakening." As for *meng* 蒙, I prefer "folly" to "ignorance," for the former includes the latter.
3. This was not limited to only children or young students but was meant for students of all ages who are setting off on the road of learning. For instance, Chapter eight is written specifically for a married man. It is argued that the book is written for adults because the character *meng* 蒙 does not refer to "youth" but to "folly" or "ignorance" which has become ingrained in people's minds. See Han 2015, 8.
4. *Injo sillok* (Annals of King Injo 仁祖實錄) 21, Year 7, Month 8, Day 17, Entry 1: "[The King] ordered the minister of rites to print the books including the Xiaoxue, the 'Song of the Five Relations,' and *Gyeongmong yogyeol* and to distribute them to people in both the capital and provinces" 令禮曹印小學, 五倫歌, 擊蒙要訣等書, 頒布中外.
5. *Injo sillok* 21, Year 7, Month 10, Day 17, Entry 3: "Yi Gyeongyong, the governor of Hwanghae province, printed hundreds of *Gyeongmong yogyeol* and submitted them to the king. The king had them distributed to people in both the capital and provinces" 黃海監司李景容印上, 擊蒙要訣數百本, 上命頒布中外.
6. *Hongjae jeonseo* (*Collected Works of Hongjae* 弘齋全書) 162: "I studied this book when I was seven years old and I have much benefited from it" 予於七歲課此書, 頗有資益矣. Hongjae is King Jeongjo's studio name.
7. The book is introduced in chapter one of part one in the *Bibliographie Coréenne*. The translation of the title is *Conseils Importants pour L'education des Enfants* (*Important Counsels for Children's Education*). For more information on the *Bibliographie Coréenne*, see Royds 1936.

In the *Veritable Records of the Joseon Dynasty*, *Gyeongmong yogyeol* was highly recommended by ministers saying that it is an instructive primer and therefore necessary to be distributed. Cho Heon 趙憲 (1544-1592), for instance, proposed to the king that the book be sent to some magistrates who could utilize it for students.<sup>8</sup>

*Gyeongmong yogyeol* served as the most concise statement of the dominant Neo-Confucian ideology in Joseon, and was highly honored and widely used for educational purposes. It is worth highlighting that, unlike most of Yi I's other works which were written either for himself or for his country and king, *Gyeongmong yogyeol* was used by both crown princes and Confucian scholars across generations.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, the introduction and translation of the text is significant and useful for understanding the type of man that Joseon society wanted its students to become, as well as the sort of education, or value system, it was eager to inculcate in them.

Considering its importance and popularity, it seems only natural that it has been translated a number of times into modern Korean,<sup>10</sup> as well as into French,<sup>11</sup> Spanish,<sup>12</sup> and English.<sup>13</sup> However, there have been only a few scholarly translations in which the allusions and unattributed quotations are identified; none of these translations are in English. This present work aims to

8. *Revised Sillok of Seonjo* 宣祖修正實錄 20, Year 19 (1586), Month 10, Day 1, Entry 4: "*Gyeongmong yogyeol* that [Yi I] composed is efficacious for teaching young students with righteousness and civilizing the populace with propriety...Your ignorant subject earnestly wishes that the rules of Yi I's private academy be applied to each local school and his *Gyeongmong yogyeol* and *Seonghak jibyo* (*Compendium of Sage Learning* 聖學輯要) be printed and distributed to the magistrates of borderline cities between provinces" 而所著, 擊蒙要訣, 又便於訓蒙以正, 開俗以禮...臣愚切願, 以此約束, 命布于各校, 又以擊蒙要訣, 聖學輯要, 印頒于界首官.
9. *Jagyeong mun* (*A Statement to Alert Myself* 自警文), *Cheondo chaek* (*Treatise on the Way of Heaven* 天道策), and *Gyeongyeon ilgi* (*A Diary of Lectures before the Throne* 經筵日記) were written for himself. On the other hand, *Dongho mundap* (*Dongho Questions and Answers* 東湖問答), *Seowon hyangyak* (*Community Code of Seowon* 西原鄉約), *Maneon bongsa* (*Ten-thousand Character Memorial* 萬言封事), *Seonghak jipyo* (*Essentials of the Learning of the Sages* 聖學輯要), *Insim dosim doseol* (*Diagrammatic Treatise on the Human mind and the Moral Mind* 人心道心圖說), and *Simu yugio* (*Six-article Memorial of Current Affairs* 時務六條) were composed for his king and country.
10. About fourteen times by different translators.
11. Sancho 2011. This is an annotated translation by a specialist in Korean Neo-Confucianism.
12. Kim 2011. The translation was done by Kim and the work was edited by Doménech del Rio under the auspices of the Literature Translation Institute of Korea.
13. Lee 2012. This has been uploaded to the Project Gutenberg website, and was accessed March 28, 2019, <http://www.gutenberg.us/>. This is written in plain English with a minimum of footnotes for smooth readability.

provide an annotated, scholarly translation in English.

### Analysis of the text

The text consists of ten chapters which are organized progressively from individual learning to daily family life and finally to social and official life. Yi I himself states in the preface that the ten chapters contain lessons on “how to form one’s will, set one’s body in order, serve one’s parents, and deal with people.” More specifically, Chapter 1 covers the necessity of resolving to learn and a student’s potential. Chapter 2 covers the negative impact of bad habits and how to eradicate them. Chapter 3 covers proper behavior and the importance of self-control. Chapter 4 covers the right way to read a book and reading sequence. Chapter 5 covers the rationale for practicing filial piety and how to perform filial piety on a daily basis. Chapter 6 covers the guidelines for funeral rituals. Chapter 7 covers instructions for sacrificial rites. Chapter 8 covers how to treat family members and how to respond to a magistrate’s gift. Chapter 9 covers how to treat older people, friends, teachers, and children. Finally, Chapter 10 proposes the proper attitude and positive mindset with regard to the civil service examination and offers advice to office holders.<sup>14</sup>

This arrangement appears to be modelled in part after the eight stages<sup>15</sup> of personal and political development expounded in the *Daxue* (*Great Learning* 大學), especially those dealing with sincere will (*chengyi* 誠意), rectifying the mind (*zhengxin* 正心), self-cultivation (*xiushen* 修身), family-regulation (*qiji* 齊家), and state-governance (*zhiguo* 治國). Chapter 1 may be said to concern itself with sincere will, Chapter 2, with rectifying the mind; Chapters 3 and 4, with self-cultivation; Chapters 5 to 8, with family-regulation; and Chapter 10, with state-governance.<sup>16</sup> The following table shows detailed contents and sources of the text.

**Table 1.** Detailed Contents and Sources of *Gyeongmong yogyeol*

Chapter	Contents	Sources
Preface 序	The Necessity of Learning and Its Ordinarity The Necessity of Reading and Probing The Motivation of Writing This Book and Its Purpose	<i>Zhuzi yu lei</i> <i>Mengzi</i> <i>Yijing</i> <i>Zhongyong</i>
1. Establishing the Will 立志	1.1. The Necessity of Establishing the Will 1.2. The Goodness of Human Nature and Potential in Me 1.3. Malleability of Mental Attributes 1.4. The Importance of Applying Immediate Efforts	<i>Zhuzi yu lei</i> <i>Jin si lu</i> <i>Mengzi</i>
2. Changing Old Habits 革舊習	2.1. The Negative Impact of Old Habits 2.2. The List of Old Habits 2.3. The Eradication of Old Habits	<i>Zuozhuan</i> <i>Lunyu</i> <i>Han Yu</i> <i>Daxue zhangju</i>
3. Conducting Oneself 持身	3.1. The Value of Loyalty and Trustworthiness 3.2. Good Behavior in Daily Life 3.3. Nine Proper Appearances 3.4. Nine Considerations 3.5. Four Prohibitory Admonitions 3.6. The Inseparability between Learning and Daily life 3.7. The Distinction between Essentials and Non-essentials 3.8. The Importance of Mastering Oneself 3.9. The Importance of Brevity 3.10. Deference to Traditional Values 3.11. Defense against External Temptations 3.12. Straighten the Internal Life with Attentiveness 3.13. The Rectification of Body and Mind 3.14. Three Principles and Two Injunctions 3.15. Self-Reflection	<i>Lunyu</i> <i>Lunyu ji zhu</i> <i>Song shi</i> <i>Shijing</i> <i>Liji</i> <i>Xiaoqing</i> <i>Yijing</i> <i>Jin si lu</i> <i>Mengzi</i>
4. Reading Books 讀書	4.1. The Reasons to Read Books 4.2. The Right Way to Read a Book 4.3. The Sequence of Reading 4.3.1. The Five Books 4.3.2. The Five Classics 4.3.3. The Song Scholars' Books 4.3.4. Historical Books and Unorthodox Books 4.4. The Right Time to Move to the Next Book	<i>Zhuzi yu lei</i> <i>Yilü ji</i> <i>Lunyu</i> <i>Mengzi ji zhu</i> <i>Mengzi</i> <i>Zhongyong</i> <i>zhangju</i> <i>Lunyu ji zhu</i> <i>Shujing ji zhuan</i> <i>Zhouyi zhuan yi</i>
5. Serving One's Parents 事親	5.1. The Rationale for Practicing Filial Piety 5.2. The Ownership of My Body 5.3. The Way to Realize the Love of Parents 5.4. The Authority of Parents 5.5. Filial Piety on a Daily Basis 5.6. The Obligation to Look After One's Parents 5.7. The Primacy of Respect between Parents and Children 5.8. The Way to Reason with Parents 5.9. The Way to Treat Parents' Illnesses 5.10. The Relation between Thinking of Parents and Daily Life 5.11. Advice for Caring for Elderly Parents	<i>Shijing</i> <i>Liji</i> <i>Zhuzi jiali</i> <i>Wang Anshi</i> <i>Lunyu ji zhu</i>

14. This paragraph is recited from Na 2019, 313.

15. The eight stages (*ba tiaomu* 八條目) are as follows: investigating things (*gewu* 格物), extending knowledge (*zhizhi* 致知), making the will sincere (*chengyi* 誠意), rectifying the mind (*zhengxin* 正心), cultivating one's persons (*xiushen* 修身), regulating the family (*jiaqi* 家齊), ordering the state (*zhiguo* 治國), and making the world tranquil (*tianxia ping* 天下平).

16. However, Chapter 9 does not fit into any category of the eight stages.

As the sources of the table show, he was clearly a Sinophile and an admirer of Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130-1200).<sup>17</sup> His recommended reading list in Chapter 4 consists of only Chinese Classics and Chinese Neo-Confucian works. In addition, every exemplary man who appears in the book is Chinese, and every quotation in the book is from a Chinese literatus, such as Han Yu or Wang Tong. For sheer number of quotations, Zhu Xi prevails.<sup>18</sup> His *Yulei* (*Topically Arranged Sayings* 語類), *Jiali* (*Family Rituals* 家禮), *Jizhu* (*Collected Commentaries* 集註), and *Jinsi lu* (*Reflections on Things at Hand* 近思錄) are the works most frequently referred to in *Gyeongmong yogyeol*. Chapters 6 and 7 which deal with funeral regulations and sacrificial ritual, respectively, each begins with a sentence containing the words “Follow the *Family Rituals*.” Furthermore, those chapters are composed mainly of passages from the *Family Rituals* and take up more than half of the content of the two chapters.

It is significant that in the preface, Yi I begins by stating, “Man is born into this world, but without learning he cannot become human.”<sup>19</sup> He repeatedly emphasizes in the book that the goal of learning is to become fully human, not to be a renowned scholar, a high minister, or a wealthy businessman. To be a complete human being leads to becoming a sage. Becoming a sage is not done by someone achieving extraordinary things but by an ordinary man living a normal life, faithfully playing his role on a daily basis. For Yi I, to lead a successful life means to be steadfast in one’s daily life and to care for people around oneself, rather than to study well and pass examinations. It is interesting to learn that although Yi I himself achieved many extraordinary things, such as winning first place in the state examinations nine times and being appointed a high official, he was neither proud of them nor did he encourage others to pursue them.

17. This applies to most Joseon scholars. However, scholars like Pak Semu 朴世茂 (1487-1554) tried presenting Koreanness in his *Dongmong seonseup* (*First Lessons for Children* 童蒙先習). Unlike *Gyeongmong yogyeol*, it contains an overview of Korean history at the end of the book.

18. Cho Heon 趙憲 (1544-1592) witnessed it before King Seonjo, “Yi I’s moral superiority and right opinion was truly inspiring for the contemporaries. In his songs and everyday speech and conduct, there was a wish to emulate Zhu Xi” 李珣之卓行格論，固可以變動當世，而雅歌常言動，有學朱之願。See *Revised Sillok of Seonjo* 20, Year 19 (1586), Month 10, Day 1, Entry 4.

19. 人生斯世，非學問，無以爲人。

### The Author: Yi I

Yi I,<sup>20</sup> pen name Yulgok 栗谷,<sup>21</sup> was a scholar and statesman. He was born in Gangneung, Gangwon province and came from a family with a long tradition of producing government officials. His mother was Lady Sin of Pyeongsan, better known as Sin Saimdang 申師任堂 (1504-1551).<sup>22</sup> Under his mother’s guidance he began to study Literary Sinitic and by the time he was seven he could understand Chinese Classics well.<sup>23</sup>

In 1564 he won first place in the Classics examination. He then obtained the position of assistant section-chief at the Ministry of Taxation and successively filled the following positions: secretary for the royal embassy honoring the birthday of the crown prince of Ming and king’s editor (1568); fifth royal secretary, censor of criminal activities, and governor of Hwanghae province (1574); minister of taxation (1581); and minister of personnel (1582). He died in Seoul at the age of forty-nine in 1584 and was buried near his parents in Paju, Gyeonggi province.

Between his official postings, he offered his resignation numerous times for various reasons including illness and being unfit for duty. Sometimes these resignations were accepted, but several times they were not. King Seonjo liked to keep Yi I nearby at all times even though he did not like to follow Yi

20. This brief biographical sketch is cited with modification from Na 2019b, 312.

21. Yulgok (“chestnut valley” 栗谷) was Yi I’s hometown, located in modern Paju, Gyeonggi province. He was born in his mother’s hometown, Gangneung in Gangwon province, but went to Paju to live at age eight. He chose the toponym as his alternative name (*byeolholbiehao* 別號) at the age of thirty-seven. He had two other alternative names: Seokdam (“stone pond” 石潭) and Ujae (“fool’s studio” 愚齋). Seokdam, where Yi I wrote *Gyeongmong yogyeol*, was located in Haeju, Hwanghae province. Ujae 愚齋 was used to refer to himself in his essay, “Eonhaeng nan” (Difficult to Say and Practice 言行難), in the *Yulgok jeonso*, Seupyu 拾遺 4. His courtesy name was Sukheon 叔獻. His friend Song Ikpil used to call him by his courtesy name.

22. Her personal name is unknown. Sin 申 is her family name. Saim 師任 means “emulating [Tae] Im (C. Tai Ren 太任).” Dang (house 堂) refers to a woman’s residence. Tai Ren was the mother of King Wen of Zhou and well-known for her prenatal education of her son. This implies Lady Sin’s wish to be a good mother. However, whether this alternative name is self-chosen or given by her father is not clear. Her life and conduct are briefly but beautifully narrated by Yi I in her biography, *Seonbi haengjang*. It was fully translated in English with annotations by Pokorny and Chang in 2015. See the preceding note.

23. “Yeonbo” 年譜, Year imin 壬寅 (1542): “The master [Yi I] began to be taught by his mother and sometimes went out to learn from a teacher. Without much effort, his learning improved day by day. By the age of seven, his understanding of writing was so great that it could naturally penetrate the Four Books and other Classics” 先生始受學於母夫人，聞就外傳，不勞而學日就。至是，文理該貫，四書諸經，率皆自通。

Yi's admonitions. Nevertheless, Yi I succeeded in leaving office temporarily in 1576 when a factional split between Easterners (Dongin 東人) and Westerners (Seoin 西人) developed. He went to his wife's hometown Haeju in Hwanghae province. The next year he built a shrine for the purpose of performing sacrificial rites with his family, which must have been a valuable experience for him as he composed Chapter seven of *Gyeongmong yogyeol*. These years seem to have been the most peaceful time in his life. Meanwhile, he was visited by a few students asking questions about how to learn. He wanted to give them something more than a makeshift answer or a desultory talk about learning. Thus, he came to write *Gyeongmong yogyeol* in 1577 in which he could provide them, and other students up to the current day, with systematic instructions on learning.

## An Annotated Translation of Yi I's *Gyeongmong yogyeol*

### Preface to Essential Instructions on Breaking Folly<sup>24</sup>

#### The necessity of learning and its ordinariness

人生斯世，非學問，無以爲人。所謂學問者，亦非異常別件物事也。只是爲父當慈，爲子當孝，爲臣當忠，爲夫婦當別，爲兄弟當友，爲少者當敬長，爲朋友當有信。皆於日用動靜之間，隨事各得其當而已。非馳心玄妙，希覲奇效者也。

Man is born into this world, but without learning he cannot be a human. That which is called learning is not something unusual or extraordinary. It is simple: as fathers, be compassionate; as children, be filial; as ministers, be loyal;<sup>25</sup> as a husband and a wife, be distinct in the roles; as brothers, be fraternal; as juniors, be respectful towards seniors; and as friends, be faithful. All of these are a matter of what one is supposed to do according to each situation found in both his daily activity and quiescence.<sup>26</sup> [Learning is] not driving one's mind after

24. *Gyeongmong yogyeol seo* 擊蒙要訣序. The translation of the author's preface and first chapter has benefited from the partial rendition made by Na 2017, 205-14.

25. Instead of "loyalty" (*chung/zhong* 忠), "reverential attentiveness" (*gyeongjing* 敬) is required from ministers in the *Zhuzi yu lei* 朱子語類 52.107: "It is proper and right for fathers to be benevolent, for children to be fraternal, for rulers to be benevolent, and ministers to be reverent" 如父當慈，子當孝，君當仁，臣當敬，此義也。

26. Activity and quiescence (*dongjeong/dongjing* 動靜) are explained in the *Zhuzi yu lei* 12:143; Gardner 1990, 178: "When there's something that must be done, it [the mind] becomes active; when there's nothing to be done, it becomes quiescent. Be that as it may, activity and quiescence have no sharp

something abstruse and wishfully expecting extraordinary things.

#### The necessity of reading and probing

但不學之人，心地茅塞，識見茫昧。故必須讀書窮理，以明當行之路，然後造詣得正，而踐履得中矣。今人不知學問在於日用，而妄意高遠難行，故推與別人，自安暴棄，豈不可哀也哉。

Without learning, the minds of people are stopped up<sup>27</sup> and their mental vision is clouded. Therefore, one must read books and probe principle.<sup>28</sup> After clarifying the path he should take, a person will be correct in direction and attain the middle way<sup>29</sup> in practice. People today<sup>30</sup> do not understand that learning is found in everyday activity; instead they think that it is something lofty, remote from daily life, and difficult to put into practice.<sup>31</sup> Accordingly, they pass the opportunity along to others, and are content to do violence to themselves and throw themselves away.<sup>32</sup> How can we not lament this?

boundaries; there's no principle strictly separating one from the other" 有事則動，無事則靜。雖然，動靜無端，亦無截然爲動爲靜之理。

27. This is an allusion to *Mengzi* 7B.21; Bloom 2009, 160: "Mencius said to Gaozi, 'There are footpaths through the hills. If they are used, in short order they become roads. If they are not used, soon wild grasses will stop them up. Now wild grasses are stopping up your mind'" 孟子謂高子曰，山徑之蹊間，介然用之而成路，爲間不用，則茅塞之矣。

28. "Probing, or investigating, principle" (*gungni/qiongli* 窮理) appears in a different context in the *Zhuzi yu lei* 11.5; Gardner 1990, 144: "... its best to read books and probe principle without any interruption; then, the mind of human desire will naturally be incapable of winning out..." 且宜讀書窮理。常不間斷，則物欲之心自不能勝。"Probing principle" can be translated as "exhaustively investigating principle" (Kalton 1988, 34) or "thoroughly fathoming principles" (Yao 2003, 310). It usually comes after "abiding in reverential attentiveness" (*geogyong/ujing* 居敬) because *jujing* has to be the foundation for *qiongli*. For more about *jujing qiongli*, see Yao 2003, 310-11.

29. "Attain the middle way" (*deukjung/dezhong* 得中) usually implies good fortune in the *Yijing*. For instance, in "Xiang zhuan" (Commentary on the Images 象傳) of the nine in the second in hexagram 40, *jie* 解, it states, "The good fortune of the perseverance of the nine in the second place is due to its attaining the middle way" 九二貞吉，得中道也。Translation from Wilhelm 1967, 587.

30. This comparison between the ancients and contemporary men is repeatedly used to criticize the behavior of the current generation, and is commonly found in Neo-Confucian texts, such as the *Zhuzi yu lei* and the *Jin si lu*.

31. Cf. *Zhongyong* 13; Legge 1991a, 393: "The path is not far from man. When men try to pursue a course, which is far from the common indications of consciousness, this course cannot be considered THE PATH" 道不遠人。人之爲道而遠人，不可以爲道 (The capitalization is Legge's). In the *Zhongyong zhangju* (Commentary on the *Zhongyong* Passage 中庸章句), the same phrase is found: "If those who practice the Way... strive to do something lofty, remote from daily life, and difficult to do, they are not practicing the Way" 若爲道者，厭其卑近以爲不足爲，而反務爲高遠難行之事，則非所以爲道。

32. This is an allusion to *Mengzi* 4A.10; Bloom 2009, 79: "To deny propriety and rightness in one's speech is what is called 'doing violence to oneself.' To say, 'I am unable to abide in humaneness or to

### The motivation for writing this book and its purpose

余定居海山之陽，有一二學徒，相從問學。余慙無以爲師，而且恐初學不知向方。且無堅固之志，而泛泛請益，則彼此無補，反貽人譏。故略書一冊子，粗敘立心飭躬奉親接物之方，名曰擊蒙要訣。欲使學徒觀此，洗心立脚，當日下功，而余亦久患因循，欲以自警省焉。丁丑季冬，德水李珣書。

When I decided to reside in the southern area of Haesan,<sup>33</sup> one or two students followed me and asked questions about learning. I felt ashamed that I was not qualified to be their teacher. But I also feared that those starting out on the path of learning might not know where to start.<sup>34</sup> Moreover, if they do not have a firm will, and always hang around asking for help, there will be no benefits to each other, and it would incur the ridicule of others. This is why I write this brief booklet and roughly describe in it how to establish the will,<sup>35</sup> how to set the body in order,<sup>36</sup> how to serve one's parents, and how to deal with people.<sup>37</sup> Its title is *Gyeongmong yogyeol* (*Essential Instructions on Breaking Folly*). I wish for students to take a look at this book, so their minds may be cleansed, and their feet stand firm, so that they proceed to study immediately. At the same time, I want to alert myself<sup>38</sup> with it, since I have long been worried that I may have

follow rightness' is what is called 'throwing oneself away' 言非禮義，謂之自暴也。吾身不能居仁由義，謂之自棄也。 Cf. *Jinsi lu* 1.14; Chan 1967, 14: "The most stupid are of two kinds, those who do violence to their own nature and those who throw themselves away" 所謂下愚有二焉，自暴也，自棄也。 A similar passage is found in the "Introduction to the Subject Matter of the *Elementary Learning*" (*xiaoxue tici* 小學題辭) of the *Xiaoxue* (*Elementary Learning* 小學): "The ordinary man is foolish and ignorant; the desire for things beclouds his vision and causes his inborn good qualities to decline, and he is content to thus do violence to himself and throw himself away" 衆人蚩蚩，物欲交蔽，乃類其綱，安此暴棄。 Translation from Kalton 1988, 68.

33. Modern Haeju in Hwanghae province in North Korea.

34. This is similar to Zhu Xi's motivation in compiling the *Jin si lu*. In the postface, he states, "Fearing that a beginner may not know where to start, we have selected passages concerned with fundamentals and closely related to daily application to constitute this volume" 懼夫初學者不知所入也。因共撿取其關於大體而切於日用者，以爲此編。 Translation from Chan 1967, 1.

35. That means establishing the resolve for learning.

36. "Set the body in order" (*chikgung/chigong* 飭躬) is explained in detail as a way of self-discipline for magistrates in the *Mongmin simseo* 2.1; Choi 2010, 51: "From the days of old it has been the way of the magistrate to keep discipline in his daily conduct, maintain his hat and belt properly, and display gravity when interacting with the people" 興居有節，冠帶整飭，莅民以莊，古之道也。

37. "Dealing with people" (*jeommull/jiewu* 接物) can mean "dealing with things." However, *mul* 物 refers to people here. Similar usages are found in the *Jin si lu* 14.17; Chan 1967, 299: "As one looked at his countenance, one found that in dealing with people he was as warm as the spring sun" 視其色，其接物也，如春陽之溫。

38. "Alerting oneself" or "cautioning oneself" (*jagyeong/jimeng* 自警) is a way for Confucian scholars and Buddhist monks to discipline themselves. For the same purpose Yi I wrote *Jagyeong mun* (*A*

been subjected to the debilitating effects of routine.

Written by Yi I of Deoksu<sup>39</sup>  
in late winter of the year Jeong Chuk (1577)<sup>40</sup>

### Chapter One: Establishing the Will

#### 1.1. The necessity of establishing the will

初學，先須立志，必以聖人自期。不可有一毫自小退託之念。蓋衆人與聖人，其本性則一也。雖氣質不能無清濁粹駁之異，而苟能眞知實踐，去其舊染，而復其性初，則不增毫末，而萬善具足矣。衆人豈可不以聖人自期乎。故孟子道性善，而必稱堯舜以實之曰，人皆可以爲堯舜，豈欺我哉。

Those beginning to learn, first of all, should establish their will,<sup>41</sup> promising themselves to become sages.<sup>42</sup> They should not hold even the slightest idea of shirking by considering themselves incompetent. In general, ordinary people and sages share the same original nature. Although material qualities<sup>43</sup> differ,

*Statement to Alert Myself*) three years after the death of his mother in 1551. For a more detailed account, see Pokorny and Chang 2011, 142.

39. Deoksu was a prefecture in Gaeseong, Hwanghae province, and was Yi I's ancestral home. His father moved to his mother's house in Gangneung, Gangwon province, where he was born and lived until the age of five. For his biography, see the third section of Introduction.

40. Jeong Chuk 丁丑 (C. Ding Chou) is the 14<sup>th</sup> year of the sexagenary cycle, the year of Fire Ox.

41. "Establishing the will," or "being determined" (*ipjillizhi* 立志) is also prioritized in Yi I's *Hakkyo mobeom* (*A Model for Schools* 學校模範) of *Yulgok jeonseo* 31 and he explains why it is so important in his *Analects* (*eorok/yulei* 語錄) of *Yulgok jeonseo* 31: "Without establishing the will, nothing can be achieved" 非立志，則萬事不成。 It is found imperative for all students in the *Zhuzi yu lei* 8.28; Gardner 1990, 105: "Students must firmly establish their wills. What is meant by 'will' isn't to overwhelm other people with one's bearing. It is just simply the desire to study Yao and Shun" 學者大要立志。所謂志者，不道將這些意氣去蓋他人，只是直截要學堯舜。 It is also considered the first concern for rulers in the *Jin si lu* 8.3 and translated as "making up the mind" by Chan 1967, 204: "Master Yichuan said: In handling affairs today there are three things that must be given first priority, namely, making up the mind, delegating responsibility, and searching for virtuous men to take the responsibility" 伊川先生曰，當世之務所尤先者有三，一曰立志，二曰責任，三曰求賢。

42. *Jin si lu* 2.65; Chan 1967, 67: "Only when people have the will to seek to become sages can we study together with them" 有求爲聖人之志然後，可與共學。 A similar passage is found in the beginning of Yi I's *Jagyeong mun*; Pokorny and Chang 2011, 145: "At first I need to set my aspirations high and make the sage the standard. If I do not attain sagehood by even a hair, my task is not completed" 先須大其志，以聖人爲準則，一毫不及聖人，則吾事未了。

43. Material qualities (*gijill/qizhi* 氣質) could mean one's temperament and character. See Han 2015, 20n10.

such as being clean or turbid, fine or coarse,<sup>44</sup> if one truly knows and actually practices what he learns, removes old stains<sup>45</sup> and restores the original nature,<sup>46</sup> then without adding the slightest bit, all goodness [will be revealed as] already being there in full.<sup>47</sup> If this is so, then how can ordinary people not promise themselves to become sages? That was why Mencius said that human nature is good and proved it by constantly commending Yao and Shun<sup>48</sup> and affirming that all human beings can become like them.<sup>49</sup> How could he ever deceive me?

### 1.2. The goodness of human nature and the potential in me

當常自奮發曰，人性本善，無古今智愚之殊，聖人何故獨爲聖人，我則何故獨爲衆人耶。良由志不立，知不明，行不篤耳。志之立，知之明，行之篤，皆在我耳，豈可他求哉。顏淵曰，舜何人也，予何人。有爲者亦若是。我亦當以顏之希舜爲法。

One must always rouse himself by saying, “if human nature is originally good and there has been no difference between the wise and the foolish across the ages, how then could a sage become a sage while I have become an ordinary man? This is because my will was not resolved, my understanding was not clear, and my action was not earnest. Establishing the will, having a clear understanding, and making earnest actions depend solely on me. Why would I seek them from others? Yan Yuan<sup>50</sup> said, “What kind of man was Shun? What kind of man am I? One who exerts effort will also be like him.”<sup>51</sup> “I myself also should emulate Yan’s wish to be like Shun.”

44. On the differentiation of principle according to the relative purity or turbidity of material force, see Kalton 1988, 50.

45. This refers to old habits.

46. Because human nature is originally good according to Mencius. Nature (*seong/xing* 性) is interpreted as one’s potential by Han 2015, 19.

47. A similar passage is found in his *Hakkyo mobeom* (*A Model for Schools* 學校模範) and “Introduction to the Subject Matter of the *Elementary Learning*” of the *Xiaoxue*: “without adding the slightest bit [of further perfection] to it, all goodness is already there in its fullness” 不加毫末，萬善足焉。Translation from Kalton 1988, 68.

48. *Mengzi* 3A.1; Bloom 2009, 49: “Mencius spoke about human nature being good, constantly commending Yao and Shun” 孟子道性善，言必稱堯舜。

49. *Mengzi* 6B.2; Bloom 2009, 133: “Cao Jiao asked, ‘Is it true that all human beings are capable of becoming a Yao or a Shun?’ Mencius said, ‘It is true’” 曹交問曰，人皆可以爲堯舜，有諸。孟子曰，然。

50. Yan Yuan 顏淵 is a courtesy name of Yan Hui 顏回 (521-481 BCE), one of the earliest disciples of Confucius.

51. *Mengzi* 3A.1; Bloom 2009, 49 with modification.

### 1.3. Malleability of mental attributes

人之容貌，不可變醜爲妍。膂力，不可變弱爲強。身體，不可變短爲長。此則已定之分，不可改也。惟有心志，則可以變愚爲智，變不肖爲賢。此則心之虛靈，不拘於稟受故也。莫美於智，莫貴於賢。何苦而不爲賢智，以虧損天所賦之本性乎。人存此志，堅固不退，則庶幾乎道矣。

As for one’s appearance, it is impossible to transform from ugly to fair. As for one’s strength, it is impossible to turn a weakling into a strongman, and as for one’s own body, there is no way to change from short to tall. For these are what one is endowed with and hence cannot be changed. As for one’s mind and will, however, it is possible to change the foolish into the wise and turn the unworthy into the worthy. For these are mental attributes, which are hollow and spiritual,<sup>52</sup> and thus are not restricted by [physical] endowment. Nothing is more desirable than being wise. Nothing is nobler than being worthy. What a pity is it that one does not become wise and worthy but instead ruins his original nature given by Heaven! [However,] if he keeps this in mind and firmly resolves not to turn back, he will come closer to the Way.

### 1.4. The importance of applying immediate efforts

凡人自謂立志，而不即用功，遲回等待者。名爲立志，而實無向學之誠故也。苟使吾志誠在於學，則爲仁由己。欲之則至，何求於人，何待於後哉。所貴乎立志者，卽下工夫，猶恐不及，念念不退故也。如或志不誠篤，因循度日，則窮年沒世，豈有所成就哉。

Generally, one says to oneself that he is resolved to learn but does not immediately make an effort. He keeps putting it off and waiting. This is because he has nominally established his resolve, but in reality is not sincere about pursuing learning. If I sincerely set my determination on learning, the strength to practice humaneness will come from within myself.<sup>53</sup> If I want humaneness, it will come.<sup>54</sup> Then why do we seek from others? Why wait until later? It is important to establish the will and apply an immediate effort, because it makes

52. Cf. *Zhuzi yu lei* 5.39: “If the mind is hollow and spiritual, how can it have any physical form?” 若心之虛靈，何嘗有物。

53. Cf. *Lunyu* 12.1; Watson 2007, 80: “Being humane proceeds from you yourself. How could it proceed from others?” 爲仁由己，而由人乎哉。

54. Cf. *Lunyu* 7.29; Watson 2007, 51: “If I want humaneness, then humaneness is right here” 我欲仁，斯仁至矣。



me careful not to withdraw, fearing that [if I do] I will never catch up.<sup>55</sup> If, by any chance, my will is insincere, but I follow routine and idle away time, then how can I achieve anything [from now] until my time on earth is over?

## Chapter Two: Changing Old Habits

### 2.1. The negative impact of old habits

人雖有志於學，而不能勇往直前，以有所成就者，舊習有以沮敗之也。舊習之目，條列如左。若非勵志痛絕，則終無爲學之地矣。

Although people set their will on learning, they are unable to boldly proceed straight to the achievements because they are discouraged by their old habits. The old habits are enumerated on the left [side of this page].<sup>56</sup> Unless one exerts his will and ruthlessly breaks [old habits], there will be no room for learning in the end.

### 2.2. A list of old habits

其一，惰其心志，放其儀形，只思暇逸，深厭拘束。其二，常思動作，不能守靜，紛紜出入，打話度日。其三，喜同惡異，汨於流俗，稍欲修飭，恐乖於衆。其四，好以文辭，取譽於時，剽竊經傳，以飾浮藻。其五，工於筆札，業於琴酒，優游卒歲，自謂清致。其六，好聚閒人，圍棋局戲，飽食終日，只資爭競。其七，歆羨富貴，厭薄貧賤，惡衣惡食，深以爲恥。其八，嗜慾無節，不能斷制，貨利聲色，其味如蔗。習之害心者大概如斯。其餘難以悉舉。

The first [bad habit] is being lazy in mind and will, and careless with demeanor, thinking only about idleness and abhorring discipline. The second is constantly thinking of moving around, unable to keep equilibrium, being busy coming and going, and spending time chattering. The third is preferring to behave like others and detesting being different, immersing oneself in current vulgarisms and being afraid of becoming alienated from the majority despite having a little wish to cultivate oneself. The fourth is being eager to gain fame from contemporaries through literary skills and making flowery writings by

55. Cf. *Lunyu* 8.17; Watson 2007, 56: “The Master said, ‘Study as though you could never catch up, [and if you did,] you would still be fearful of losing it’” 學如不及，猶恐失之。 See also *Zhuzi yu lei* 123.16: “When one pursues learning, he should do as if he extinguished a fire or chased a fugitive, fearing that he could not reach him” 人之爲學，當如救火追亡，猶恐不及。

56. The text in Literary Sinitic is written vertically and is arranged in columns that run from right to left on the page.

plagiarizing the Classics. The fifth is putting efforts into calligraphy and letters, indulging in music and wine, wasting life idling about,<sup>57</sup> while looking upon them as refined tastes. The sixth is enjoying gatherings of idlers and playing *baduk*<sup>58</sup> and chess, and stuffing oneself with food all day,<sup>59</sup> which only fuels fights and rivalry. The seventh is admiring riches and honors but hating poverty and lowliness, being deeply ashamed of poor clothing and poor food.<sup>60</sup> The eighth is taking delight in carnal pleasure without limit, being unable to curtail or control it, regarding money, profit, music, and sex as sweets. These are the habits most detrimental to the mind. The details of the rest are impossible to be enumerated.

### 2.3. The eradication of old habits

此習使人志不堅固，行不篤實，今日所爲，明日難改。朝悔其行，暮已復然。必須大奮勇猛之志，如將一刀快斷根株。淨洗心地，無毫髮餘脈，而時時每加猛省之功，使此心無一點舊染之污，然後可以論進學之工夫矣。

These habits make people's will waver and their behavior insincere, so what they do today they hardly change tomorrow and what they regret in the morning they do again in the evening.<sup>61</sup> They must greatly stir a fierce will [to eradicate them] as if they were about to cut off tree roots with a stroke of the sword. They should cleanse their mind until not the slightest trace remains, and from time to time make every effort to examine themselves rigorously. Only after removing every filthy spot of the old habits from the mind<sup>62</sup> may they discuss advancement in learning.

## Chapter Three: Conducting Oneself

### 3.1. The value of loyalty and trustworthiness

學者必誠心向道，不以世俗雜事亂其志，然後爲學有基址。故夫子曰，主忠信。

57. A truncated passage from *Zuozhuan*, “Lord Wen” 12; Durrant et al. 2016, 2:1083: “Freely, easily, / Just let the year come to an end like this” 優哉游哉，聊以卒歲。 The first half appears in the final stanza of *Shijing* 222, “Cai Shu” 采芣。

58. A strategy board game, which is best known in the West by its Japanese name *go*.

59. *Lunyu* 17.22; Watson 2007, 124.

60. *Lunyu* 4.9; Watson 2007, 33.

61. “Song qiong wen” (Sending off Poverty 送窮文) by Han Yu 韓愈 (768-824).

62. Chapter one of *Daxue zhangju* (Chapter and Verse Commentary on the Great Learning 大學章句).

朱子釋之曰，人不忠信，事皆無實。爲惡則易，爲善則難。故必以是爲主焉。必以忠信爲主，而勇下工夫，然後能有所成就。黃勉齋所謂真實心地，刻苦工夫，兩言盡之矣。

Students must be sincere in their minds toward the Way and not allow the myriad affairs of the world to disturb their intentions. Only afterward will their learning have a foundation. Thus, the Master (Confucius) said, “Put the foremost value on loyalty and trustworthiness.”<sup>63</sup> And Master Zhu (Zhu Xi) explicated it thus, “If people are not loyal and trustworthy, none of their work will bear fruit. Doing evil would be easy for them but doing good would be difficult. Therefore, they must take these to be of the utmost importance.”<sup>64</sup> They must put loyalty and trustworthiness first and boldly set [their hearts] to studying, then they will become accomplished. Huang Mianzhai<sup>65</sup> said, “Make the heart truthful. Be assiduous in your studies.”<sup>66</sup> These two sentences fully explain the meaning.

### 3.2. Good behavior in daily life

常須夙興夜寐。衣冠必正。容色必肅。拱手危坐。行步安詳。言語慎重。一動一靜，不可輕忽苟且放過。收斂身心，莫切於九容，進學益智，莫切於九思。

Always rise early and go to sleep late.<sup>67</sup> One's clothing and cap must be put on properly.<sup>68</sup> Have a serious look. Sit formally with dignity and with your hands folded. Walk with ease and mindfulness. Be careful with words. Each activity and each quiescence must neither be undertaken carelessly nor perfunctorily.<sup>69</sup> As for the way to concentrate your mind and body, nothing is better than the Nine [Proper] Appearances. As for the way to advance in learning and grow in wisdom, nothing is better than the Nine Considerations.

63. *Lunyu* 1.8; Watson 2007, 17.

64. *Lunyu ji zhu* (Collected Commentaries on the Lunyu 論語集註) on *Lunyu* 1.8.

65. Mianzhai 勉齋 is the pen name of Huang Gan 黃幹 (1152-1221), an official and Neo-Confucian scholar of the Song dynasty. As Zhu Xi's pupil, he wrote the biographical account of his teacher.

66. *Songshi* (The History of Song 宋史) 438, “The Biography of He Ji” 何基.

67. *Shijing* 58, “Mang” 氓, Stanza 5.

68. Cf. *Jin si lu* 10.64; Chan 1967, 258-59: “In front of boys, one must be correct in attire and serious in expressions. This is the third benefit” 對之，必正衣冠，尊瞻視，三益也。This is one of the four benefits from teaching young boys.

69. Cf. *Zhuzi yu lei* 12.47: “Each activity and each quiescence should always nurture [one's mind]” 一動一靜，無時不養。

### 3.3. Nine proper appearances

所謂九容者，足容重 [不輕舉也，若趨于尊長之前，則不可拘此.]，手容恭 [手無慢弛，無事則當端拱，不妄動.]，目容端 [定其眼睫，視瞻當正，不可流眇邪睇.]，口容止 [非言語飲食之時，則口常不動.]，聲容靜 [當整攝形氣，不可出噦咳等雜聲.]，頭容直 [當正頭直身，不可傾回偏倚.]，氣容肅 [當調和鼻息，不可使有聲氣.]，立容德 [中立不倚，儼然有德之氣像.]，色容莊 [顏色整齊，無怠慢之氣.]。

That which is called Nine Appearances is as follows:<sup>70</sup> The feet should look heavy. (Yi I's note: Do not move your feet lightly. If you have to walk hastily before elders,<sup>71</sup> you are not obliged to follow this rule.) The hands should be held respectfully. (Yi I's note: Hands should not droop. When there is no work to be done, hold your hands together and do not move them about rashly.) The eyes should look straight ahead. (Yi I's note: Arrange your eyes so that the gaze is correct. Do not look askance at others or stare at them.) The mouth should be kept quiet and composed. (Yi I's note: If it is neither time to speak nor eat, the mouth should not open.) The voice should be calm. (Yi I's note: Control your breath. Do not make random sounds like belching and coughing.) The head should be upright. (Yi I's note: Keep your head upright and straighten your body. Do not turn your head or tilt it.) The breathing should be solemn. (Yi I's note: Moderate your nasal breathing in order not to make a breathing sound.) When standing, look virtuous. (Yi I's note: Stand straight without leaning. Have a solemn and virtuous deportment.) The face should look grave. (Yi I's note: Make your face orderly, without an air of indolence about it.)

### 3.4. Nine considerations

所謂九思者，視思明 [視無所蔽，則明無不見.]，聽思聰 [聽無所壅，則聰無不聞.]，色思溫 [容色和舒，無忿厲之氣.]，貌思恭 [一身儀形，無不端莊.]，言思忠 [一言之發，無不忠信.]，事思敬 [一事之作，無不敬慎.]，疑思問 [有疑于心，必就先覺審問，不知，不措.]，忿思難 [有忿必懲，以理自勝.]，見得思義 [臨財必明義利之辨，合義然後取之.]。常以九容九思，存於心而檢其身。不可頃刻放捨，且書諸座右，時時寓目。That which is called Nine Considerations is as follows:<sup>72</sup> When seeing, think of

70. *Liji*, “Yu Zao” 玉藻 53; Legge 1885b, 25 with modification. Six of the nine appearances are found in the *Zhuzi yu lei* 12.109; Gardner 1990, 172 with modification. Cf. *Zhuzi yu lei* 87.47.

71. Walking with hasty steps before elders was considered proper manners. Cf. *Lunyu* 16.13; Legge 1991a, 316: “He was standing alone once, when I passed below the hall with hasty steps” 嘗獨立，鯉趨而過庭。

72. *Lunyu* 16.10; Watson 2007, 117 with modification.

clarity. (Yi I's note: If the vision is not blocked, it will be clear and everything<sup>73</sup> will be visible.)<sup>74</sup> When listening, think of discernment. (Yi I's note: If the hearing is not obstructed, it will be discerning and everything will be audible.)<sup>75</sup> In facial expressions, think of warmth. (Yi I's note: The countenance should be benign without an air of anger.) In attitude, think of courtesy. (Yi I's note: Demeanor should be dignified.) In speech, think of loyalty.<sup>76</sup> (Yi I's note: Even a single uttered word should be loyal and faithful.) In work, think of reverential attentiveness.<sup>77</sup> (Yi I's note: In doing a task, everything should be done with attentiveness and carefulness.) When in doubt, think of inquiry. (Yi I's note: When there is doubt in your heart, go to your teacher and carefully inquire. When there is something that you have not fully grasped, do not leave it.)<sup>78</sup> When angry, think of the consequences. (Yi I's note: If you are angry, restrain it.<sup>79</sup> Overcome yourself with principle.) When seeing gain, think of righteousness. (Yi I's note: When finding wealth, distinguish what is right from what is profitable. Only when it agrees with what is right should you take it.) Always abide by the Nine Appearances and the Nine Considerations, with which you should examine yourself. Do not neglect them even for a moment. Write them down on the corner of your seat so that you may look at them all the time.

### 3.5. Four prohibitory admonitions

非禮勿視，非禮勿聽，非禮勿言，非禮勿動，四者，修身之要也。禮與非禮，初學難辨，必須窮理而明之。但於已知處力行之，則思過半矣。

73. This means that everything you need to see.

74. This note is not Yi I's own but quoted from the *Lunyu ji zhu* on *Lunyu* 16.10.

75. Ibid.

76. "Loyalty" (*chung/zhong* 忠) means "to be sincere and loyal to one's moral nature" (Chan 1967, 17n62).

77. "Reverential attentiveness" (*gyeongjing* 敬) has been rendered as "seriousness" (Chan 1967, 361-62), "mindfulness" (Kalton 1988), and "inner mental attentiveness" (Gardner 1990). Since I agree that Gardner's explanation of "inner mental attentiveness" refers to a state of mind in which the mind is fully concentrated on what is before it, without any distractions (Gardner 1990, 89), I adopt his reading but feel that "mental" seems redundant. For more on the term, see Chan 1967, 361-62; Kalton 1988, 212-14.

78. This means that when there is something that you have considered but not fully grasped, do not move on until you have. Cf. *Zhongyong* 20; Legge 1991a, 413-14: "While there is anything he has not inquired about, or anything in what he has inquired about which he does not know, he will not intermit his labor" 有弗問，問之弗知，弗措也。

79. Cf. "Xiang zhuan" 象傳 in hexagram 41, *sun* 損 of the *Yijing*; Wilhelm 1967, 591: "At the foot of the mountain, the lake: the image of decrease. Thus the superior man controls his anger and restrains his instincts" 山下有澤，損。君子以懲忿窒欲。

"If it is contrary to propriety, do not look at it. If it is contrary to propriety, do not listen to it. If it is contrary to propriety, do not utter it. If it is contrary to propriety, do not do it."<sup>80</sup> These four injunctions are the essentials of self-cultivation. It is difficult for beginners to discern whether it is contrary to propriety or not. Thus, they must investigate principle and clarify it. If they diligently practice what they already know, their thought already covers more than half of propriety.

### 3.6. Learning and daily life are inseparable

爲學在於日用行事之間。若於平居，居處恭，執事敬，與人忠，則是名爲學。讀書者，欲明此理而已。

Learning lies in the matters of daily life. If people, in their daily routine, are respectful inside their residence, attentive in handling affairs, and loyal in dealing with others,<sup>81</sup> then what they do can be called learning. Reading books is nothing other than trying to clarify this principle.

### 3.7. The distinction between essentials and non-essentials

衣服不可華侈，禦寒而已。飲食不可甘美，救飢而已。居處不可安泰，不病而已。惟是學問之功，心術之正，威儀之則，則日勉勉而不可自足也。

Clothes should not be luxurious; if they keep out the cold, they are good enough. Food should not be delectable; if it staves off hunger, it is good enough. Houses do not have to be comfortable; if people living there do not become ill, they are good enough. Pursuing learning, righting the mind, and having dignified manners are the only things that one ought to diligently work on every day and never become complacent about.

### 3.8. The primacy of mastering oneself

克己工夫，最切於日用。所謂己者，吾心所好，不合天理之謂也。必須檢察吾心，好色乎，好利乎，好名譽乎，好仕宦乎，好安逸乎，好宴樂乎，好珍玩乎。凡百所好，若不合理，則一切痛斷，不留苗脈。然後吾心所好，始在於義理，而無己可克矣。

Mastering the self<sup>82</sup> is the most important act of daily life. What I call "myself"

80. *Lunyu* 12.1; Watson 2007, 80 with modification.

81. *Lunyu* 13.19; Watson 2007, 92 with modification. This passage is found in the *Jin si lu* 4.13; Chan 1967, 127.

82. "Mastering the self" (*geukgi/keji* 克己) is from *Lunyu* 12.1; Watson 2007, 80: "Yan Yuan asked about

is my heart's desire in discord with the Heavenly principle. It is essential to examine my own heart: Does it desire sex? Does it desire money? Does it desire fame? Does it desire government posts? Does it desire a comfortable life? Does it desire a feast? Does it desire valuable curios? If the things desired do not correspond to the principle, cut them off ruthlessly and do not leave any seeds. Then my heart's desire will belong to the righteous principle and there will be no "self" to be overcome.

### 3.9. The importance of brevity

多言多慮，最害心術。無事則當靜坐存心。接人則當擇言簡重。時然後言，則言不得不簡。言簡者近道。

Much speech and many worries are the most harmful to the cultivation of the mind. If there is no work to do, sit in silence and preserve the mind. When meeting people, select appropriate words and deliver them succinctly and carefully. The words are succinct when delivered at the right time.<sup>83</sup> Those who speak succinctly are near the Way.

### 3.10. Deference to traditional values

非先王之法服，不敢服。非先王之法言，不敢道。非先王之德行，不敢行。此當終身服膺者也。

"If an article of dress is not sanctioned by the customs of the former kings, the ministers and high officials would not presume to wear it; if ways of speaking are not sanctioned by the customs of the former kings, they would not presume to use them; if ways of behaving are not consistent with the exemplary conduct of the former kings, they would not presume to act in such a way."<sup>84</sup> These words should be taken to your bosom<sup>85</sup> throughout your life.

humaneness. The Master said, "To master the self and return to ritual is to be humane" 顏淵問仁，子曰，克己復禮為仁。It is compared to "warding off the robber" in the *Zhu zi yu lei* 9.26; Gardner 1990, 119: "If we liken the 'extension of knowledge,' 'inner mental attentiveness,' and 'subduing the self,' these three matters, to a house, 'inner attentiveness' corresponds to the man who guards the door, 'subduing the self' corresponds to warding off the robber, and the 'extension of knowledge' corresponds to investigating the external affairs that affect one's home" 致知，敬，克己，此三事，以一家譬之。敬是守門戶之人，克己則是拒盜，致知卻是去推察自家與外來底事。

83. *Lunyu* 14.14; Watson 2007, 98: "My master spoke only when it was time to do so, thus others did not object to his speaking" 夫子時然後言，人不厭其言。

84. *Xiao jing* 4; Rosemont and Ames 2009, 107.

85. "Taking something to one's bosom" or "wearing it on one's breast" (*pogeu*ng/*fuying* 服膺) is from

### 3.11. Defense against external temptations

為學者一味向道，不可為外物所勝。外物之不正者，當一切不留於心。鄉人會處，若設博奕樗蒲等戲，則當不寓目，逡巡引退。若遇倡妓作歌舞，則必須避去。如值鄉中大會，或尊長強留，不能避退，則雖在座，而整容清心，不可使奸聲亂色有干於我。當宴飲酒，不可沈醉，浹洽而止可也。凡飲食當適中，不可快意有傷乎氣。言笑當簡重，不可喧譁以過其節。動止當安詳，不可粗率以失其儀。

Students should persistently pursue the Way. They should not be overcome by external things.<sup>86</sup> None of these things must remain in their minds. If a chessboard, a *baduk* board, or dice<sup>87</sup> are set up in the villagers' meeting place, then they should not set eyes on them but step back away from it. If they see entertainer-courtesans singing and dancing, they must avoid them. If they come across a big gathering which is unavoidable because an elder has forced them to stay, they should be orderly in appearance and clean in heart, even though they must sit there lest lewd sounds or licentious sights break into their mind. Though they drink, they should not get drunk. They should stop drinking when they feel a little inebriated. They should eat a proper amount of food lest gluttony harm the vital force. Words and laughter must be terse and careful, and not so loud lest they cross the line of moderation. Activity and quiescence must be carried out with quiet and care. A dignified manner must not be lost by being rough and careless.

### 3.12. Straighten the internal life with attentiveness

有事則以理應事。讀書則以誠窮理。除二者外，靜坐收斂此心，使寂寂無紛起之念，惺惺無昏昧之失可也。所謂敬以直內者如此。

When you have work to do, do it according to principle. When you read a book, investigate principle to the utmost with sincerity. In situations other than these two, sit in silence and concentrate your mind. Let it be calm without any

*Zhongyong* 8; Legge 1991a, 389: "The Master said, This was the manner of Hui: he made choice of the Mean, and whenever he got hold of what was good, he clasped it firmly, as if wearing it on his breast, and did not lose it" 子曰，回之為人也。擇乎中庸，得一善，則拳拳服膺而弗失之矣。

86. Cf. *Jin si lu* 10.64; Chan 1967, 56: "When one is strong internally, he can overcome the external, which is light" 內重，則可以勝外之輕。

87. This is called *chupu* (K. *jeopo* 樗蒲), an ancient Chinese gambling game similar to *yut* in Korea, resembling today's dice. It appears in *Manboksa jeopo gi* (*Old Bachelor Yang Plays a Cheopo Game with a Buddha of Thousand Blessing Temple* 萬福寺樗蒲記), one of the well-known stories of Kim Siseup 金時習 (1453-1493).

disturbing thoughts and be vigilant against becoming obtuse. This is what is called “straightening the internal life with attentiveness.”<sup>88</sup>

### 3.13. The rectification of body and mind

當正身心，表裏如一。處幽如顯，處獨如衆，使此心如青天白日，人得而見之。常以行一不義，殺一不辜而得天下，不爲底意思，存諸胸中。

You should rectify your body and mind. Your exterior and interior must be consistent. When you are in darkness, you should act as if you were in the light. When you are alone in a room, you should act as if you were among others. Let your mind be visible like the bright sun in the blue sky<sup>89</sup> so that everybody can see it. “None would have performed one act that was not right or killed one innocent person in order to possess all under heaven.”<sup>90</sup> Always keep its meaning in your heart.

### 3.14. Three principles and two injunctions

居敬以立其本，窮理以明乎善，力行以踐其實三者，終身事業也。思無邪，毋不敬，只此二句，一生受用不盡。當揭諸壁上，須臾不可忘也。

By remaining in reverential attentiveness, one establishes the foundation.<sup>91</sup> By investigating principle, one is clear about what is good.<sup>92</sup> By diligent practice, one applies the truth in his life. These three things shall be your business as

88. *Yijing*, hexagram 2, *jie* 坤, the six in the second, “Wen yan” (Explanation of the Text 文言): “Straightness means righting things; squareness means fulfillment of duty. The superior man is attentive, in order to make his inner life straight; he does his duty, in order to make his outer life square” 直其正也，方其義也。君子，敬以直內，義以方外。 Translation from Wilhelm 1967, 393 with modification. This is repeatedly quoted in the *Jin si lu* in relation to “employing words and establishing sincerity” (2.16; Chan 1967, 48); to “humanity” (4.39; *ibid.* 139); to “cultivating the mind” (4.44; *ibid.* 142); to “holding fast to the mind” (4.46; *ibid.* 143); to “a superior man” (12.15; *ibid.* 273); to “the learning of the Buddhists” (13.3; *ibid.* 273). See also the *Zhu zi yu lei* 12.77 in relation to “inner attentiveness.”

89. This expression is used to describe Confucius’ demeanor in the *Jin si lu* 14.2: “Confucius had clear brightness in his body like the bright sun in the blue sky, thus he was most clear and bright [in disposition]” 夫子，清明在躬，猶青天白日，故極其明快。 This passage is omitted in the translation of Chan, *Reflections on Things at Hand*.

90. *Mengzi* 2A.24; Bloom 2009, 32.

91. Cf. *Jin si lu* 10.64: “By putting prime value on reverential attentiveness, one establishes the foundation. By investigating principle, one advances his understanding” 主敬以立其本，窮理以進其知。 This passage is omitted in the translation of Chan’s *Reflections on Things at Hand*.

92. Cf. *Zhongyong* 20; Bloom 2009, 80 with modification: “If one is not clear about what is good, one will not be sincere within oneself” 不明乎善，不誠乎身矣。 This is quoted in the *Mengzi* 4A.12.

long as you live. “Have no depraved thoughts”<sup>93</sup> and “Never lack reverential attentiveness.”<sup>94</sup> These two phrases will never be exhausted even if you use them all your life.<sup>95</sup> Post them on the wall<sup>96</sup> so that you may never forget them even for a moment.

### 3.15. Self-reflection

每日頻自點檢，心不存乎，學不進乎，行不力乎。有則改之，無則加勉，孜孜毋怠，斃而後已。

Every day frequently examine yourself: Has my heart not been preserved? Have I failed to progress in learning? Have I made no effort to practice [the Way]? If such is the case, correct it. If not, make a greater effort and keep working without being lazy.<sup>97</sup> You may stop only when you die.<sup>98</sup>

## Chapter Four: Reading Books<sup>99</sup>

### 4.1. The reasons to read books

學者常存此心，不被事物所勝。而必須窮理明善，然後當行之道，曉然在前，

93. *Shijing* 297, “Jiong” 頌, Stanza 4; Legge 1991d, 613. Cf. *Lunyu* 2.2; “The Master said, ‘In the *Book of Poetry* are three hundred pieces, but the design of them all may be embraced in one sentence—Having no depraved thoughts’” 子曰，詩三百，一言以蔽之，曰思無邪。 Watson (2009, 20n1) points out that Confucius interpreted it didactically but out of context and instead he suggests “Ah, never swerving!” because the understood subject of the verb is carriage drivers. This is similar to Waley’s (1960, 309) rendering: “O without slip.”

94. *Liji*, “Qu Li I” 曲禮上 1: “Always and in everything let there be reverential attentiveness; with the deportment grave as when one is pondering, and with speech composed and definite” 毋不敬，儼若思，安定辭。 Translation from Legge 1885a, 61 with modification.

95. Cf. *Jin si lu* 4.15: “Master Mingtao said, ‘Have no depraved thoughts.’ ‘Never lack seriousness.’ If one follows only these two teachings and puts them into practice, how can he make any mistake?” 明道先生曰 思無邪，毋不敬，只此二句，循而行之，安得有差。 Translation from Chan 1967, 128 with modification.

96. It was customary for Confucian scholars to put adages on the walls of their rooms. For example, the well-known “Western Inscription” (*ximing* 西銘) was a brief statement that Zhang Zai 張載 (1020-1077) wrote and posted on the western wall of his study.

97. *Lunyu ji zhu* on *Lunyu* 1.4; Gardner 2003, 136: “Zengzi, on these three counts, examined his own person every day, and if there was a failing, he corrected it; if there was not, he intensified his efforts” 曾子，以此三者，日省其身，有則改之，無則加勉。

98. This appears in the *Lunyu* 8.7 with a variant character *si* 死 (K. *sa*) in place of *bi* 斃 (K. *pye*): “Master Zeng said, ‘The man of station must be both broad-minded and resolute. His burden is heavy, and the road is long. Humaneness is the burden he is charged with—heavy, is it not? The road ends only with death—long, is it not?’” Translation from Watson 2007, 55.

99. There is an in-depth study of this chapter in English (Glomb 2012).

可以進步。故入道莫先於窮理，窮理莫先乎讀書。以聖賢用心之迹及善惡之可效可戒者，皆在於書故也。

Students should always preserve the mind which should not be overcome by external things.<sup>100</sup> They must investigate principle to the utmost and have a clear understanding of what is good. Only then will the way be clear before them and will they make progress. Therefore, in entering the Way nothing is prior to investigating principle. And in investigating principle nothing is prior to reading books,<sup>101</sup> because the traces of how the sages and worthies exerted their minds, and what we should emulate and guard against concerning good and evil are all contained in books.

#### 4.2. The right way to read a book

凡讀書者，必端拱危坐，敬對方冊。專心致志，精思涵泳，[涵泳者，熟讀深思之謂]深解義趣，而每句必求踐履之方。若口讀而心不體身不行，則書自書我自我，何益之有。

Readers must sit in a dignified manner with their hands folded and treat a book with respect, concentrating their mind and applying their will,<sup>102</sup> giving it careful thought and immersing themselves in it. (Yi I's note: "Immerse oneself" refers to a close reading and deep rumination.) They ought to deeply understand its meaning and intention, and by every means search for the way they can practice. If I<sup>103</sup> read the book with my mouth but do not comprehend it with my mind or do not practice it with my body, the book will be the book and I will be I. What use would it be?<sup>104</sup>

100. Cf. *Jin si lu* 10.64; Chan 1967, 56: "When one is strong internally, he can overcome the external, which is light" 內重，則可以勝外之輕。

101. Cf. *Xingli daquan shu* (*The Great Compendium of Nature and Principle* 性理大全書) 44: "In entering the Way, nothing is prior to the investigation of principles. The essentials of the investigation of principle are in the reading of books" 為學之道，莫先於窮理。窮理之要，必在於讀書。

102. Cf. *Mengzi* 6A.9; Bloom 2009, 32: "Now, chess is one of the minor arts, but without concentrating one's mind and applying one's will, one cannot succeed in it" 今夫弈之為數，小數也。不專心致志，則不得也。

103. Yi I changed the point of view from the third-person plural to the first-person singular.

104. This means no interaction between the book and the reader. Quoted from the *Zhuzi yu lei* 16.40. Similar passages are found in *Zhuzi yu lei* 10.57; Gardner 1990, 135: "To be a man is just to be a man, to read a book is just to read a book" 為人自是為人，讀書自是讀書。See *Zhuzi yu lei* 13.2; Gardner 1990, 180: "If we're unable to practice it, goodness will be goodness, and we will be we" 未能行，善自善，我自我。See also *Zhuzi yu lei* 8.88; Gardner 1990, 111: "After a while you and it will become one. With people today, however, moral principle is here, and they are external to it—moral principle and people have absolutely nothing to do with each other" 久之與己為一。而今人道

### 4.3. The sequence of reading

#### 4.3.1. The Five Books

先讀小學，於事親敬兄忠君弟長隆師親友之道，一一詳玩而力行之。次讀大學及或問，於窮理正心修己治人之道，一一真知而實踐之。次讀論語，於求仁為己，涵養本原之功，一一精思而深體之。次讀孟子，於明辨義利，遏人慾存天理之說，一一明察而擴充之。次讀中庸，於性情之德，推致之功，位育之妙，一一玩索而有得焉。

First of all,<sup>105</sup> read *Elementary Learning*<sup>106</sup> which shows the ways of serving parents, reverencing older brothers, being loyal to the ruler, showing respect to elders, honoring teachers, and caring for friends. Consider the ways in every detail and practice them diligently.<sup>107</sup> Next, read *Great Learning*<sup>108</sup> and *Questions [on the Greater Learning]*<sup>109</sup> which show the ways of investigating principle, rectifying the mind, cultivating the self, and governing people. Get to truly know all of them [i.e. the texts] and actually practice them. Next, read the *Analects*,<sup>110</sup> which shows what the efforts of seeking humaneness are,<sup>111</sup> of

理在這裏，自家身在外面，全不會相干涉。

105. Cf. *Daxue huowen* (*Questions on the Greater Learning* 大學或問) 1: "Thus, if when one is young he does not verse himself in it [the Way] through *Elementary Learning*, he will not have the means to recover his errant mind and heart and foster the good qualities of his nature in order to lay the foundation for the *Great Learning*" 是以方其幼也，不習之於小學，則無以收其放心，養其德性，而為大學之基本及其長也。Translation from Kalton 1988, 69. The *Daxue huowen* is partially quoted in the explanation on the third diagram of Yi Hwang's *Seonghak sipdo* (*Ten Diagrams on Sage Learning* 聖學十圖)。

106. The *Xiaoxue* 小學 was a textbook for young pupils compiled by Liu Zicheng 劉子澄 (1139-1195) in 1187 during the Southern Song period. He collected important passages from the Confucian Classics and histories to inculcate Confucian ideology in youngsters.

107. This is found in the *Collected Works of Yilü* (*Yilü ji* 醫問集) 1: "Master Zhu collected essential and unadulterated words in the *Elementary Learning*. It is worth considering every one of them in detail and practicing them with effort" 文公採輯於小學者，精粹之言也，可詳玩而力行之。Yilü is an alternative name of He Qin 賀欽 (1437-1510), whose works were read and quoted by Korean Confucian scholars like Yi Hwang and Hong Daeyong 洪大容 (1731-1783).

108. *Daxue* 大學 is a compact text that lays the groundwork for learning and outlines a moral scheme of Confucian learning, brief in length but expansive in scope. It was originally a chapter of the *Liji* and later included as one of the Four Books by Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130-1200). Its authorship is generally attributed to Zisi 子思 (ca. 483-ca. 402 BCE).

109. One of the *Questions on the Four Books* (*Sishu huowen* 四書或問). It is said that after the *Collected Commentaries on the Sections and Sentences of the Four Books* (*Sishu zhangju ji zhu* 四書章句集注) were finished, the *Questions* were written to further explain controversial passages in the style of questions and answers, and therefore show why Zhu Xi himself preferred one interpretation to another.

110. *Lunyu* 論語 is a collection of the sayings and conversations of Kong Qiu 孔丘 (ca. 551-ca. 479 BCE) that shows his life and thoughts and covers the basic concepts of Confucianism. After Confucius died, his disciples edited and compiled them. Accordingly, the work is titled *Lunyu*, literally "Edited Conversations." See Knechtges and Chang 2014, 645-50.

111. *Lunyu* 7.14; Watson 2007, 49: "Entering the Master's room, Zigong said, 'What sort of men were

studying to improve himself,<sup>112</sup> and of nurturing source.<sup>113</sup> Reflect on all of them carefully and internalize them deeply. Next, read the *Book of Mencius*,<sup>114</sup> which introduces theories for distinguishing righteousness from profit,<sup>115</sup> for keeping [selfish] human desires in check, and for preserving the principle of Heaven.<sup>116</sup> Examine all of them clearly, and enlarge and bring them to fulfillment.<sup>117</sup> Next, read the *Doctrine of the Mean*,<sup>118</sup> which shows the virtue of nature and feelings,<sup>119</sup> the effort of extending to the utmost,<sup>120</sup> and the wonder of being placed and nurtured.<sup>121</sup> Search for all of them and get something from them.

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- Bo Yi and Shu Qi?’ The Master said, ‘Worthy men of antiquity. Did they harbor rancor? They sought to behave humanely, and they succeeded in doing so. Why would they harbor rancor?’ 入曰，伯夷叔齊何人也，曰，古之賢人也。曰，怨乎。曰，求仁而得仁，又何怨。 Cf. *Mengzi* 7A.4; Bloom 2009, 144: “To dedicate oneself in all earnestness to reciprocity—there can be no closer approach to humaneness” 強恕而行，求仁莫近焉。
112. *Lunyu* 14.25; Watson 2007, 100: “The Master said, ‘Formerly people studied to improve themselves; now they do so to impress others’” 子曰，古之學者爲己，今之學者爲人。
113. *Zhuzi yu lei* 9.14; Gardner 1990, 118: “Think about moral principle; nurture the source” 思索義理，涵養本原。
114. *Mengzi* 孟子 is a collection of the sayings and discussions of Meng Ke 孟軻 (ca. 372-ca. 289 BCE) had with rulers, disciples, and interlocutors. It is purportedly attributed to him and covers various moral and political ideas in a sophisticated manner. See Knechtges and Chang 2014, 668-71.
115. Cf. *Jin si lu* 7.26; Chan 1967, 195: “The difference Mencius made between Shun and Zhi is purely that between righteousness and profit” 孟子辨舜跖之分，只在義利之間。 See also *Mengzi* 7A.25; Bloom 2009, 32: “If you want to know what separates Shun and Zhi—it is nothing but the space between profit and goodness” 欲知舜與跖之分，無他，利與善之間也。
116. *Mengzi ji zhu* 孟子集註 (*Collected Commentaries on the Mengzi*) on *Mengzi* 1B.5: “When the subtle beginning of things emerged from the ruler’s questions, Master Meng analyzed it in order to block [selfish] human desires and to preserve the principle of Heaven” 孟子因時君之問，而剖析於幾微之際，皆所以遏人欲而存天理。 This is found in the explanation on the eighth diagram of the *Seonhak sipdo*. See Kalton 1988, 160.
117. *Mengzi* 2A.6; Bloom 2009, 35: “When we know how to enlarge and bring to fulfillment these four sprouts that are within us, it will be like a fire beginning to burn or a spring finding an outlet” 凡有四端於我者，知皆擴而充之矣，若火之始然，泉之始達。
118. *Zhongyong* 中庸 is the most abstract work among the Four Books that states how the Way is associated with human nature bestowed by Heaven, which shows the philosophical subtlety. Like the *Daxue*, it was originally a chapter of the *Liji* and later included as one of the Four Books by Zhu Xi. Its authorship is traditionally attributed to Kong Ji 孔伋, also known as Zisi 子思。
119. *Zhongyong zhangju* 1: “This speaks of the virtue of the nature and feelings to illustrate the meanings of the statement that the path may not be left” 此言性情之德，以明道，不可離之意。 Translation from Legge 1991a, 384n4 with modification.
120. Cf. *Zhongyong zhangju* 1: “To reach means to extend to the utmost” 致，推而極之也。
121. “Being placed and being nurtured” (*wiyuk/weiyu* 位育) is an abbreviated phrase of “heaven and earth are placed in their proper position and all things are nurtured” 天地位焉，萬物育焉。 This is located in the last verse of the *Zhongyong* 1. This abbreviation is also found in the Presentation Address (*chaja* 筓子) of the *Seonhak sipdo*: “The practice of this kind of reverent fear and mindfulness is nothing extraordinary; it is simply part of everyday life, but it can bring about the

#### 4.3.2. The Five Classics

次讀詩經，於性情之邪正，善惡之褒戒，一一潛繹感發而懲創之。次讀禮經，於天理之節文，儀則之度數，一一講究而有立焉。次讀書經，於二帝三王治天下之大經大法，一一領要而溯本焉。次讀易經，於吉凶存亡進退消長之幾，一一觀玩而窮研焉。次讀春秋，於聖人賞善罰惡抑揚操縱之微辭奧義，一一精研而契悟焉。

Next, read the *Classic of Songs*,<sup>122</sup> which shows the rights and wrongs of nature and feelings,<sup>123</sup> and praise for good and condemnation of evil. Ponder them, encouraging [the good] and chastising [the wrong].<sup>124</sup> Next, read the *Classic of Rites*,<sup>125</sup> which reveals the regulated patterns of heavenly principle and the proper measures of rituals and rules.<sup>126</sup> Examine all of them and establish yourself in them. Next, read the *Classic of Documents*,<sup>127</sup> which shows the great invariable relations [of mankind] and the great codes with which the Two Emperors and the Three Kings<sup>128</sup> ruled the kingdom.<sup>129</sup> Acquire the essentials

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- ‘perfect equilibrium [of the mind before it is aroused] and perfect harmony [after it is aroused],’ ‘establish [heaven and earth] in their proper positions and accomplish the nurture [of all things]’ 畏敬不離乎日用，而中和位育之功可致。 Translation from Kalton 1988, 36.
122. *Shijing* 詩經, also known as *Mao shi* 毛詩, is the earliest collection of Chinese poetry, a collection of 305 songs from the early Western Zhou to the middle of the Spring and Autumn period. Although it is said in the *Shiji* 史記 that Confucius culled three thousand songs down to 305, many modern scholars have doubts. See Knechtges and Chang 2014, 904-15.
123. *Zhuzi yu lei* 11.88: “The *Book of Changes* contains *yin* and *yang*; the *Book of Songs* right and wrong; the *Book of Documents* order and disorder” 易有箇陰陽，詩有箇邪正，書有箇治亂。
124. *Zhuzi yu lei* 23.2: “The aim of teaching poetry is as follows: to encourage the good heart and to chastise the depraved mind” 此詩之立教如此，可以感發人之善心，可以懲創人之逸志。 Cf. *Lunyu ji zhu* 2.2.
125. *Lijing* 禮經, known as *Liji* (*Record of Rites* 禮記), is a collection of ritual texts on proper ceremonies and philosophical essays on Confucian ideals. Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (127-200) in the *Liuyi lun* 六藝論 says that Dai Sheng 戴聖 (1<sup>st</sup> century BCE) transmitted the *Li* 禮. See Knechtges and Chang 2014, 488-90.
126. *Lunyu ji zhu* on *Lunyu* 1.12; *Zhuzi yu lei* 6.23: “The rites are the regulated patterns of heavenly principle and the rituals and rules of human affairs” 禮者，天理之節文，人事之儀則。
127. *Shujing* 書經 is a collection of the earliest examples of Chinese prose. It is composed of texts from the royal court and includes historical narratives covering a period from the ancient sage-kings to the Zhou dynasty. A much earlier title for the work is *Shangshu* (*Hallowed Writings of Antiquity* 尚書). There are two versions: one is the *Jinwen Shangshu* (*Modern script Shangshu* 今文尚書) edited by Confucius and the other the *Guwen Shangshu* (*Ancient Script Shangshu* 古文尚書) found by King Gong of Lu 魯恭王 (d. 127 BCE). See Knechtges and Chang 2014, 814-30.
128. The “Two Emperors” (*er di* 二帝) are Yao and Shun and the “Three Kings” (*san wang* 三王) are King Yu 禹王, founder of the Xia dynasty; King Tang 湯王, founder of the Shang dynasty; and both King Wen 文王 and King Wu 武王 of the Zhou dynasty.
129. The preface 序 of the *Shujing ji zhuan* (*Collected Commentaries on the Classic of Documents* 書經集傳): “All the great invariable relations [of mankind] and the great codes with which the Two

and return to the fundamentals. Next, read the *Classic of Changes*,<sup>130</sup> which shows the subtle beginnings of good and evil fortune [of things], of their existence and destruction, of their advance or retreat, and of their waxing and waning.<sup>131</sup> Observe them and probe into them. Next, read the *Spring and Autumn Annals*,<sup>132</sup> in which sage men use subtle words and profound meaning [to expound] on rewarding the good and punishing the evil,<sup>133</sup> on praising and censuring, and on regulating and liberating. Study all of them in detail and understand them properly.

#### 4.3.3. The Song Scholars' Books

五書五經，循環熟讀，理會不已，使義理日明。而宋之先正所著之書，如近思錄，家禮，心經，二程全書，朱子大全，語類及他性理之說，宜間間精讀，使義理常常浸灌吾心，無時間斷。

The Five Books<sup>134</sup> and the Five Classics<sup>135</sup> must be read through thoroughly one after another, in repeated cycles.<sup>136</sup> Try to understand them without ceasing

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- Emperors and Three Kings ruled the kingdom are in this book. How could I reveal all the accumulated profundity with my poor opinions and shallow learning?" 二帝三王治天下之大經大法，皆載此書，而淺見薄識，豈足以盡發蘊奧。
130. *Yijing* 易經, known as *Zhouyi* (*Changes of the Zhou Dynasty* 周易), reputedly was the divination text for the people of the Zhou dynasty and is believed to be a collection of notes that were intended as aids to diviners. It was orally transmitted and evolved into an anthology of omens and their related prognostications, popular sayings, and wisdom about nature. See Knechtges and Chang 2014, 1877-96.
  131. The preface of the *Zhouyi zhuan yi* (*Commentaries on the Changes of the Zhou Dynasty* 周易傳義): "The principles of good and evil fortune, and of the waxing and waning of things, and the way of their advance or retreat and of their existence or destruction, are fully contained in the remarks" 吉凶消長之理，進退存亡之道，備於辭。This is quoted in the *Jin si lu* 3.49; Chan 1967, 108.
  132. *Chunqiu* 春秋 is a historical record of the state of Lu from 722 to 481 BCE that covers domestic affairs, wars, and the occurrences of natural disasters. It was traditionally attributed to Confucius, but modern scholars doubt this origin. See Loewe 1993, 67-76.
  133. Mao's preface (*mao xu* 毛序) to "Zhan Bi Luo Yi" (Look at the Luo River 瞻彼洛矣): "Zhan Bi Luo Yi" satirizes King You, remembering that the ancient King Ming rewarded the good and punished the evil by granting feudal lords official ranks.
  134. These refer to the *Elementary Learning*, the *Great Learning*, the *Analects*, the *Book of Mencius*, and the *Doctrine of the Mean*. Yi I added the *Elementary Learning* to the Four Books and made it five. The Four Books were assembled by Zhu Xi (1130-1200) as the core of Confucian teachings and all of them were accompanied by his commentary. They became the basis of the civil service examination in both China and Korea for over five hundred years.
  135. These refers to the *Classic of Songs*, the *Classic of Rites*, the *Classic of Documents*, the *Classic of Changes*, and the *Spring and Autumn Annals*.
  136. Cf. *Jin si lu* 3.76; Chan 1967, 122: "The Six Classics must be gone through one after another, in repeated cycles. The student will find that their moral principles are unlimited" 六經，須循環理會，義

and make moral principles clear every day. In one's leisure time, closely read the books of the Song scholars, such as the *Reflections on Things at Hand*,<sup>137</sup> the *Family Rituals*,<sup>138</sup> the *Classic on the Heart/Mind*,<sup>139</sup> the *Complete Works of the Two Chengs*,<sup>140</sup> the *Complete Works of Master Zhu*,<sup>141</sup> the *Topically Arranged Conversations of Master Zhu*,<sup>142</sup> and other theories on nature and principle. Always let moral principles flow unceasingly into your mind.

#### 4.3.4. Historical Books but No Unorthodox Books

而餘力亦讀史書，通古今，達事變，以長識見。若異端雜類不正之書，則不可頃刻披閱也。

Still, if you have strength remaining,<sup>143</sup> read histories to understand the

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- 理儘無窮。The Six Classics consist of the traditional Five Classics and the *Yueji* (*Records of Music* 樂記).
137. *Jin si lu* 近思錄 (literally, near-thought-record) is an anthology of Neo-Confucianism, presenting an over-all view of its metaphysical, ethical, political doctrines and its evaluation of heterodoxical systems, specifically Buddhism and Taoism. It was compiled by Zhu Xi and his collaborator, Lü Zuqian 呂祖謙 (1137-1181). See Chan 1967, "Introduction."
  138. *Zhuji jiali* (*Family Rituals of Master Zhu* 朱子家禮) is a manual of the standard Chinese family rituals for the private performance of initiations (*guan* 冠), weddings (*hon* 婚), funerals (*sang* 喪), and sacrifices (*je* 祭). It was compiled by Zhu Xi. See Ebrey 1991, "Introduction."
  139. *Xin jing* 心經 is an anthology of classical and commentarial passages selected from the Four Books and the Five Classics and from the works of Neo-Confucian scholars, such as the Cheng brothers, Zhou Dunyi, and Zhu Xi. It was compiled by Zhen Dexiu 真德秀 (1178-1235) while he served as magistrate of Quanzhou 泉州 (1232-1233) in order to avoid the risk of the heart/mind being distracted by conflicting demands. It was highly regarded by Korean Confucian scholar Yi Hwang 李滉 (1501-1570). See Makeham 2010, 239-48.
  140. *Er Cheng quanshu* 二程全書 is a collection, compiled by Zhu Xi, that contains most of the writings and conversations of Cheng Hao 程顥 (1032-1085) and Cheng Yi 程頤 (1033-1107). The two brothers are identified with the group known as the Five Masters of the Northern Song period (960-1127). They strove to restore Confucianism by developing a moral metaphysics and referring to it as "the learning of the way" (*dao xue* 道學) or "the learning of principle" (*li xue* 理學). See Makeham 2010, 59-60; 89-91.
  141. *Zhuji daquan* 朱子大全 is another name of *Hui'an xiansheng Zhu Wengong wenji* (*Collection of Literary Works by the Lord of Culture, Zhu, Master of Hui'an* 晦庵先生朱文公文集). The main collection in 100 *juan* was compiled by Zhu Zai 朱在 (b. 1169) in 1245. It includes Zhu Xi's memorials, lectures to the emperor, poems, essays, prefaces, tomb inscriptions, and almost two thousand letters to about five hundred people. See Tillman in Yao 2003, 849-50. The collection was transmitted to Korea and officially printed in 1575 by Yu Heuichun 柳希春 (1513-1577).
  142. *Zhuji yulei* 朱子語類 is a compilation of Zhu Xi's conversations and discussions with his disciples on various topics, such as nature, principle, books, government, thinkers, and thoughts. The disciples wrote them down, then collected them together and edited them in 140 *juan* in 1270. See Gardner 1990, "Preface."
  143. Cf. *Zhuji yu lei* 11.131; Gardner 1990, 161: "If you still have strength remaining, read the dynastic histories" 有餘力，則看全史。



changing events from antiquity to the present and expand the intellectual vision. Unorthodox books<sup>144</sup> that contain heterodox doctrines or other miscellaneous writings must not be browsed for even a single moment.

#### 4.4. The Right Time to Move on to the Next Book

凡讀書，必熟讀一冊，盡曉義趣，貫通無疑，然後乃改讀他書，不可貪多務得，忙迫涉獵也。

In reading, it is imperative to read one book thoroughly and comprehend its meaning and intention exhaustively. Only then may you move on to other books. Do not strive for quantity<sup>145</sup> or busy wading and hunting through numerous books.

### Chapter Five: Serving One's Parents

#### 5.1. The rationale for practicing filial piety

凡人莫不知親之當孝，而孝者甚鮮，由不深知父母之恩故也。詩不云乎。父兮生我，母兮鞠我，欲報之德，昊天罔極。

There is no one who does not know that people should fulfill their filial duty to their parents, but there are only a few who practice it. This is because they do not truly understand their parents' loving kindness. Is it not said in the *Book of Songs*?: "O my father, who begat me!/O my mother, who nourished me!/If I would return your kindness,/It is like great heaven, illimitable."<sup>146</sup>

#### 5.2. The ownership of my body

人子之受生，性命血肉，皆親所遺。喘息呼吸，氣脈相通，此身非我私物，乃父母之遺氣也。故曰，哀哀父母，生我劬勞。

When children are given life, their nature and destiny, together with their flesh and blood, are all inherited from their parents. While panting and resting or breathing in and breathing out, our vital energy and pulses are communicated [with our parents']. This body is not my own property but the energy that my

144. It is interesting to note that Yi I himself read an unorthodox book, the *Dao de jing* 道德經, or the *Laozi* 老子, on which he even wrote a commentary from the Neo-Confucian perspective, titled *Sun eon* 醇言. For more information on the *Sun eon*, see Glomb 2016, 15-47.

145. Cf. *Zhuzi yu lei* 10.40; Gardner 1990, 132: "In reading, don't strive for quantity. Instead become intimately familiar with what you do read" 讀書不可貪多，且要精熟。

146. *Shijing* 202, "Liao E" 蓼莪, Stanza 4; Legge 1991d, 352. Yi I removed the middle lines.

parents bequeathed me. Therefore, it is said, "Alas for my father and mother,/ Alas for all their trouble in bringing me up!"<sup>147</sup>

#### 5.3. The way to realize the love of parents

父母之恩，爲如何哉。豈敢自有其身，以不盡孝於父母乎。人能恒存此心，則自有向親之誠矣。

How great is the love of parents? How could one claim his body without performing filial duty wholeheartedly toward one's parents? If people manage to keep this in mind at all times, they will naturally have a sincere heart towards their parents.

#### 5.4. The authority of parents

凡事父母者，一事一行，毋敢自專，必稟命而後行。若事之可爲者，父母不許，則必委曲陳達，頷可而後行。若終不許，則亦不可直遂其情也。

Those who serve their parents should not do any work on their own or take part in whatever activity they desire. Only after getting their parents' orders may they do so. If parents do not allow something, no matter how good it is, [the son should] explain it politely and in detail. When they allow something, then he may go on with it. If they would not allow it at all, then he should do not fulfill his desire.

#### 5.5. Filial piety on a daily basis

每日未明而起，盥櫛衣帶，就父母寢所，下氣怡聲，問燠寒安否。昏則詣寢所，定其褥席，察其溫涼。日間侍奉，常愉色婉容，應對恭敬，左右就養，極盡其誠。出入，必拜辭拜謁。

Every day, before daybreak, get up and wash your hands and comb your hair. Put on clothes and a sash, and then go to your parents' bedroom.<sup>148</sup> Calmly and with a gentle voice, ask them if their clothes are too warm or too cold and whether any part of them is uncomfortable.<sup>149</sup> At dusk, go to their room,

147. *Shijing* 202, "Liao E" 蓼莪, Stanzas 1 and 2; Waley 1960, 184.

148. This appears to imply that the parents slept together in the same room. During the Joseon period, however, a married couple slept in different rooms.

149. *Liji*, "Nei Ze" 內則; Legge 1885a, 450 with modification: "Thus dressed, they should go to their parents and parents-in-law. On getting to where they are, calmly and with a gentle voice, they should ask if their clothes are [too] warm or [too] cold, whether they are ill or pained, or uncomfortable in any part; and if they be so, they should proceed reverently to stroke and scratch

prepare their bedding, and see if it is warm or cool enough for them.<sup>150</sup> During the day when attending them, always have a pleasant look and an amiable demeanor.<sup>151</sup> Respond with respect, and wait on and look after them in every possible way<sup>152</sup> with your entire heart. When going out, kowtow to them and leave. When coming back, kowtow to them and report.

### 5.6. The obligation to look after one's parents

今人，多是被養於父母，不能以己力養其父母。若此奄過日月，則終無忠養之時也。必須躬幹家事，自備甘旨然後，子職乃修。若父母堅不聽從，則雖不能幹家，亦當周旋補助，而盡力得甘旨之具，以適親口，可也。若心心念念，在於養親，則珍味，亦必可得矣。每念王延，隆冬盛寒，體無全衣，而親極滋味，令人感歎流涕也。

Most people today were nurtured by their parents but are unable to look after them [in return]. If they spend their time casually and do nothing, they will never have an opportunity to care for them. They must manage family affairs and prepare delicious food. Only then may they be said to fulfill their filial duty. If their parents do not agree with this and as a result they cannot manage family business, still they should diligently assist their parents and do their best to prepare delicious food suitable to their parents' tastes. If their minds and thoughts focus on looking after their parents, they will certainly be able to obtain delicious food. Always remember Wang Yan<sup>153</sup> who served delicious

food even though he did not have a decent coat in the biting cold of midwinter, which moves people to tears.

### 5.7. The primacy of respect between parents and children

人家父子間，多是愛逾於敬，必須痛洗舊習，極其尊敬。父母所坐臥處，子不敢坐臥。所接客處，子不敢接私客，上下馬處，子不敢上下馬，可也。

In most households, love exceeds respect in the relationship between father and son. This old practice must be wiped out and replaced with the utmost respect. Children should not dare to sit or lie on the place where their parents sit or lie. They should not dare receive their personal guests in the place where their parents receive their guests. They should not dare mount or dismount a horse where their parents mount or dismount a horse.

### 5.8. The way to reason with parents

父母之志，若非害於義理，則當先意承順，毫忽不可違。若其害理者，則和氣怡色柔聲以諫，反覆開陳，必期於聽從。

If the wishes of one's parents do not go against moral principle, anticipate their intentions and carry them out accordingly<sup>154</sup> without disobeying even a little bit. If their wishes go against principle, admonish them over and over with a calm expression and a soft voice in an amicable manner and earnestly hope that they will listen.<sup>155</sup>

### 5.9. The way to treat parents' illness

父母有疾，心憂色沮。捨置他事，只以問醫劑藥為務，疾止，復初。

When a parent is ill, your heart must be sad and your look dejected. Above

the place" 以適父母舅姑之所，及所，下氣怡聲，問衣煖寒，疾痛苛癢，而敬抑搔之。The context here is about the duty of a daughter-in-law.

150. Cf. *Liji*, "Qu Li I" 曲禮上; Legge 1885a, 67: "For all sons it is the rule: In winter, to warm (the bed for their parents), and to cool it in summer; in the evening, to adjust everything (for their repose), and to inquire (about their health) in the morning" 凡為人子之禮，冬溫而夏清，昏定而晨省。

151. Cf. *Liji*, "Ji Yi" 祭義; Legge 1885b, 215: "A filial son, cherishing a deep love (for his parents), is sure to have a bland air; having a bland air, he will have a look of pleasure; having a look of pleasure, his demeanor will be mild and compliant" 孝子之有深愛者，必有和氣；有和氣者，必有愉色；有愉色者，必有婉容。

152. *Liji*, "Tan Gong I" 檀弓上; Legge 1885a, 121 with modification: "In serving his father, (a son) should conceal (his faults), and not openly or strongly remonstrate with him about them; should in every possible way wait on and look after him..." 事親有隱而無犯，左右就養無方。

153. Wang Yan 王延 (fl. ca. 310), courtesy name Yanyuan 延元, was known as a filial son in the Western Jin dynasty (265-316). He was from Xihe 西河 (modern southern Inner Mongolia). He caught a fish in winter for his stepmother who oppressed him. See *Jin shu* 晉書 88, "Wang Yan" 王延. It is recorded that Yi I himself had a similar stepmother, or to be specific, "his father's concubine who had an irascible temper and liked to drink. But Yi served her like his own mother" 庶母性悍且嗜飲，先生事之如親母。See the *Collected Works of Master Weolsa* 月沙先生集 53, "Biographical Record for Master Yulgok's Posthumous Title" 栗谷先生諡狀。

154. Cf. *Liji*, "Ji Yi"; Legge 1885b, 226: "What the superior man calls filial piety requires the anticipation of our parents' wishes, the carrying out of their aims and their instruction in the path (of duty)" 君子之所為孝者，先意承志，論父母於道。

155. Cf. *Liji*, "Nei Ze" 內則; Legge 1885a, 456 with modification: "If a parent has a fault, [the son] should calmly, and bland aspect, and gentle voice, admonish him. If the admonition does not take effect, he should be more reverential and the more filial; and when the father seems pleased, he should repeat the admonition. If [the parent] is displeased with this, rather than allow him to commit an offence against anyone in the neighborhood or countryside, [the son] should strongly remonstrate. If the parent becomes angry and [more] displeased, and beat him till the blood flows, he should not presume to be angry and resentful, but be [still] more reverential and more filial" 父母有過，下氣怡色，柔聲以諫。諫若不入，起敬起孝，說則復諫。不說，與其得罪於鄉黨州閭，寧執諫。父母怒，不說，而撻之流血，不敢疾怨，起敬起孝。

all other affairs, devote yourself sorely to consulting a doctor and preparing medicine. When the illness is over, you may resume a normal life.<sup>156</sup>

### 5.10. The relation between thinking of parents and daily life

日用之間，一毫之頃，不忘父母然後，乃名為孝。彼持身不謹，出言無章，嬉戲度日者，皆是忘父母者也。

If during your daily life, you do not forget your parents for even a moment, then this can be called an act of filial piety. Those who behave carelessly, speak without propriety, and waste time amusing themselves are all the type of people who forget their parents.

### 5.11. Advice for caring for elderly parents

日月如流，事親不可久也。故為子者，須盡誠竭力，如恐不及，可也。古人詩曰，古人一日養，不以三公換。所謂愛日者，如此。

Time flows like a river, so the time to serve one's parents is not long. Therefore, being a child, you must do your best with the utmost sincerity for fear that you fail to fulfill [your duty]. In the past, a man wrote a poem saying,<sup>157</sup> "The ancients did not exchange one day of serving parents with the position of the three highest offices."<sup>158</sup> This is what is called valuing each day.<sup>159</sup>

156. *Zhuzi jiali* 1.3; Ebrey 1991, 28: "Disregarding all other affairs, he devotes himself sorely to getting the best doctor, filling the prescription, and preparing the medicine. Only after his parent has recovered may he resume his normal way of life" 舍置餘事，專以迎醫檢方合藥為務。疾已，復初。 Cf. *Liji*, "Qu Li I" 曲禮上; Legge 1885a, 83: "When his father or mother is ill, [a young man] who has been capped should not use his comb, nor walk with his elbows stuck out, nor speak on idle topics, nor take his lute or cittern in hand. He should not eat of [different] meats till his taste is changed, nor drink till his looks are changed. He should not laugh so as to show his teeth, nor be angry till he breaks forth in reviling. When the illness is gone, he may resume his former habits" 父母有疾，冠者不櫛，行不翔，言不惰，琴瑟不御，食肉不至變味，飲酒不至變貌，笑不至矧，怒不至詈。疾止復故。

157. "Sending off Qiao Zhizhong, Recommended Talent, Returning to Gaoyou" 送喬執中秀才歸高郵 by Wang Anshi 王安石 (1021-1086). This poem is included in *juan* 9 of *Wang Linchuan ji* (*Collected Works of Wang Linchuan* 王臨川集).

158. *Sam gong* (C. *san gong* 三公) is the term for the three top officials in government from the Zhou to the Qing. See Hucker 1985, 399.

159. *Lunyu ji zhu* on *Lunyu* 4.21; Gardner 2003, 136: "If you are always aware of the age of your parents, you will be happy that they enjoy a long life, but be afraid that they are getting decrepit. So [that] you won't stop taking the sincerity of your service to your parents, valuing each day you have with them" 常知父母之年，則既喜其壽，又懼其衰，而於愛日之誠，自有不能已者。 Cf. *Yangzi Fayan* 揚子法言 13.3; Bullock 2011, 181: "That which cannot be prolonged enough—this is called serving one's parents. A filial son values each day he has with them" 不可得而久者，事親之謂也。孝子愛日。

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