

Master Wang's Commentary

4₂-A

燕山五子儀儼侃偁僖

宋初皆爲名臣鉅卿

yen¹ shan¹ wu³ tzu³ yi² yen³ k'an^{3/4} ch'eng⁴ hsi¹
 sung⁴ ch'u¹ chieh¹ wei² ming² ch'en² chü⁴ ch'ing¹

The five sons of Yen-shan, [were named] Correct (righteousman), Correct (punctualman), Correct (modelman), Correct (steelyardman), Correct (happyman). At the inception of the Sung, they served in functions of famous ministers and grand secretaries of State.

It is Chinese tradition to choose for all one's sons *ming*'s that show the same radical. Yen-shan did even more: he chose *ming*'s with roughly the same meaning. Of these five boys, both the *Jen ming ttt.* and *M.* list only Yi, Yen, and Ch'eng (pp. 1773d, 1775a, 1772d; and 8.25695.15; 32; 36, respectively).

N.B.: In conformity with Chinese ways, if one son reaches a high position, his brothers will equally rise to honours; but the downfall of one of them will also bring doom upon the rest of the family (cf. # X).

> 侃 k'an^{3/4} “upright, firm”. The right part of the kanji is uncommon: it is however listed in *K'ANG-HSI* and briefly mentioned in *M.*, 2.3295; pronounced p'in³ and glossed 並 J. *narau*, “to emulate, imitate” (viz one's ancestors; synonym: 肖).

> 僖 may be written indifferently with, or without, the “man” radical. Normally the kanji is read in the first tone, ch'eng¹ “to give weight, to estimate (highly), to glorify”; but since the other names somehow convey the meaning of “correctness”, it appears preferable to read the name in the fourth tone, ch'eng⁴ “a steelyard, conform, appropriate”.

M. 1.828.I, knows for 僖 only one reading, ch'eng¹, which, according to the *Shuo wen*, means 揚 yang², J., ageru, “to rise,

to lift up, to praise”. *Ibid.* II, 偁 equals 稱 which would allow the proposed reading and interpretation, but could not be used because there had to be a 人 radical (cf. VIE, note).

Strangely enough, 名臣 *M.*, 2.3297.183 and 鉅卿 *M.*, 11.40286.8 appear not to be quotations (the former to be found in *Pei*, p. 433.1, as occurring in the *Han shu* and other historical writings; the latter is not listed).

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4₂-B

世守其父之家法。奕葉貴顯

shih⁴ shou³ ch'i² fu⁴ chih¹ chia¹ fa^{3.5} . yi^{4.5} yeh^{4.5} kuei⁴ hsien³

Generation upon generation observed the family rules of such a great father and they prospered and were honoured.

> 世 “generation upon generation” (interpreted in the same way as 日 “day after day”), or should we understand that only this one generation of the “Five dragons” observed the rules? Possible, but unlikely: Master Wang would have formulated it differently.

N.B.: Feng Tao, in his panegyric (cf. # IV₁), refers to the five Tou boys as “the Five Dragons”.

> 其 may show emphasis, not unlike the Latin *ille*.

> 家法 these existed in writing, possibly. They were a usual feature of Chinese literate families (cf. e.g. Teng Ssu-yü, *Family instructions for the Yen Clan*, or the “Green box” of the Wang family in C.B. Langley, *Wang Ying lin*, note 79, p. 215-217).

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4₂-C

皆嚴親訓迪之功也

chieh¹ yen² ts'in¹ hsün⁴ t'i^{2.5} chih¹ kung¹ yeh³

Any father [could obtain such] positive results by being an appropriate model of conduct [for his sons].

The statement is ambiguous: the above translation links chieh¹ to yen² ts'in¹; but it could as well be linked to kung¹: *all this was the positive result of paternal education*. The ambiguity appears to be intentional (cf. the parallel statement # 3₂-L).

> 嚴親 “the strict relative” is a formal way of designating a father.

> 迪音揚 : “迪 sounds t'i⁵” VIE; normal reading ti⁵, same meaning (cf. *M.*, 11.38795)

> 訓迪 has become an expression and was registered by *Mth.*, 2914.22 “to open up a man’s intelligence”. Yet 訓 is properly “to educate by setting a good example and by providing a suitable environment, a general atmosphere conducive to positive results” (cf. # 4₁-A & ff, B, E, F, G); and 迪 is “*suivre une ligne de conduite, suivre une règle ou un modèle*” (*Cd.* p. 922 c).

Quotation:

訓迪 *Shu ching*, V. XX. 4 (*L.*, p. 526):

仰惟前代時若訓迪厥官

Chou Wang is speaking: “... Now I, the minime infant, am sedulous at increasing my potency, early and late not content with the results; awed by former generations, I continuously apply myself to conforming to their example, setting in turn the pattern of behaviour for you, [my] officers.”

Chou Wang expresses an axiom fundamental to Chinese ethics of power: cf. the double catena of “*The Great Learning*” (*L.*, p. 357 ff.; *C.*, II, p. 615): *The ancients ... wishing to order well their States, first regulated their families; wishing to regulate their families, they first cultivated their persons; &c.* and the commentary on it, *L.*, p. 369-370; *C.*, II, p.623 (§ 16-17): *This is the meaning of the words: ‘to establish good order in one’s family by perfecting oneself’... and ... ‘in order to govern one’s State, one must first establish good order in one’s own family’*” By duck-and-drake Master Wang anticipates # V₁.

V₁

Fifth Couplet, First Line

養不教 . 父之過
yang³ pu^{4.5} chiao⁴ . fu⁴ chih¹ kuo⁴

Rhyme: 過 kuo⁴ rhyme 箇 ko⁴.

> 過 has three pronunciations and three rhymes, *M.*, 11.39002:

– kuo¹, rhyme 歌 ko¹ (“a song”): “to pass at, or in front of”, as in 三過其門而不入 : when Yü was busy bringing the world in order, he was absent from home for eight years: although he *passed three times in front of the gate of his [house], he did not enter it*. Confucius praised such great dedication to work (*MENCIUS*, *HY.* 20/3A/4 = 33/4B/29; *L.*, p. 251 & 335; *C.*, p. 424 & 501). Used as a current saying, it is a hyperbole for “an overly industrious person”, or a humorous euphemism for “erectile deficiency”.

– huo³, rhyme 罽 ko³ (“to approve”): “an oilcan” (for lubricants).

– kuo⁴, rhyme 箇 ko⁴: “to pass through, to trespass, to do wrong”.

> 箇 glossed by the *Shuo wen* as 枚 mei² “a bamboo rod” or “a cane” with which “to cane” pupils, also “a horse whip”. It is worth noting that the next couplets, being descriptive of formal teaching, all rhyme on whipping and caning.

Translation:

Not to educate the brood, is a father's blame.

The first half verse has become a current saying, cf. *Mth.*, 7254.2.

Quotation:

養子不教 . 父之過

Ssu-ma Kuang's "Song exhorting to study" 司馬光 . 勸學歌. The text of this, and of similar songs is to be found in *M.*, 2.2486.24. (Remember: in the film "Farewell my concubine" the scene of the pupils chanting at a lake shore.)

Internal quotation:

> 養 "to rear, to feed, to breed"; however, 養子 is taken from "The Great Learning", a pericope quoted at the end of 4₂-C:

未有學養子而后嫁者也

No girl would ever learn to breed children, while waiting to find a husband later on. L., p. 370, 2; and C., II. p. 625, or 4 Livres, p. 16, French: "to bring up a child", does not correspond to reality: nubile girls are taught by their mothers how to "bring up a child"; C. Latin: alere filios "to suckle children" is a transparent euphemism: what is meant is (reiterated) premarital childbearing.

Master Wang's Commentary

5₁-A

父母之於子不患不慈但患失教

fu⁴ mu³ chih¹ yü² tzu³ pu^{4.5} huan⁴ pu^{4.5} tz'u² . tan⁴ huan⁴ shih^{1.5} chiao⁴

In regard to their son, parents should not worry that they may fall short of tenderness. On the contrary, they should worry that they may be negligent in educating [him].

Quotation:

"*On the contrary*": Given the ferocious demands which were made on boys, and the equally ferocious beating meted out to them whenever these demands were not met, the incompatibility of tenderness and education was a Chinese reality. Philologically, however, it results from a cascade of ducks-and-drakes:

> 不患 ... 患 + negation: a construction contrasting the usual, which calls for no effort, and something which, on the

contrary, calls for sustained efforts. It occurs in the *Lun yü* three times, each time applicable to the present context.

– 1) *HY.* 2/1/16 (*L.*, p. 145; *C.*, p. 76):

不患人之不己知 . 患不知人也

I would not be concerned that people may misjudge me;

[but] I do worry that I may misjudge people. – Hence: study the *Odes*!

– 2) *HY.* 6/4/14 (*L.*, p. 169; *C.*, p. 104):

不患無位 . 患所以立 : 不患莫己知 . 求爲可知也
Be not anxious about obtaining a public office; rather be anxious about making yourself worthy of it. Be not afflicted that you are not famous; rather strive to become worthy of renown. – Hence: study the *Ceremonies*!

Legge, Couvreur and Wilhelm (p. 34) are unanimous in their interpretation of 立. In this they follow the commentary of Chu Hsi (namely: 所以立乎其位者). But he adds:

程子曰 . 君子求其在己者而已矣

Ch'eng-tzu said: "A gentleman strives to stay faithful to himself. Period."

This word appears to refer to what we would style “a good, old-fashioned sense of honour”. The meaning also fits the subsequent quotations.

> 立 “to stand upright, firm, constant”.

The above quotations 1 and 2 refer us to the last apophthegm of the *Lun yü*:

子曰 . 不知命 . 無以爲君子也 . 不知禮 . 無以立也
 不知言 . 無以知人也

The Master said: "Das Wissen um die Fügung des Himmels ist Vorbedingung des Adels; das Wissen um die Gebräuche ist Vorbedingung des Ehrgefühls; das Wissen um das Wort ist Vorbedingung der Menschenkenntnis.

(Literally: “if the heavenly ordinances are ignored, there is no means by which to be a *chün tzu* ; if the Ceremonies are ignored, there is no means by which to hold a sense of honour; if [the significance of] the words is ignored, there is no means by which to understand men.”)

This, in turn, brings us to *Lun yü*, *HY*. 34/16/13 (*L.*, p. 315-316; *C.*, p. 257-258): the pericope of Confucius admonishing his son to study the “Book of Odes” and the “Book of Ceremonies”. He says:

不學詩無以言 and 不學禮無以立.

Without studying the Odes, one is unskilled in using words.

Without studying the Ceremonies, one has no standard by which to hold a sense of honour.

The interlocutor is delighted: “I asked one question and learned three things: I learned about the *Odes*; I learned about the *Ceremonies*; and I learned that *a gentleman maintains a distant reserve towards his son*: 君子之遠其子也*.

*) Or, that “a gentleman stays clear of the vagina of his child.” (daughter or daughter-in-law.) The *Lun-yü* is notoriously replete with naughty double entendres, cf. *HERBERT FRANKE*.

– 3) *HY*. 33/16/1 (*L.*, p. 308; *C.* 251) is a longish dialogue: the prosperity of a family depends *not so much* (不患) on the great number of sons, *than* (但患) on the harmony that reigns among them – which is the fruit of a good education.

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5₁-B

有子而不能教. 豈非父之過乎

yu³ tzu³ erh² pu^{4.5} neng² chiao⁴ . ch'i¹ fei¹ fu⁴ chih¹ kuo⁴ hu²

To have a son and not to teach him as much as possible, how could this not be a father's blame?

> 能教 *to teach as much as one can*, namely to the limit of the parents' physical, intellectual and financial capacity, see # 2-A.