Mind, Heaven, and Ritual in the *Xunzi*

1 Introduction

Where could we locate Xunzi (荀子) among later thinkers following Confucius? While Mengzi (孟子) has received an excessive amount of attention as the successor of Confucius regarding *renyi* (仁義), Xunzi has been viewed more in relation with the Legalists (法家) than with Confucius. I would like to suggest that we can find the Confucian idea of *ren* (仁) also in Xunzi. The purpose of this paper is to trace the process of transition from Confucian *ren* to *liyi* (禮義) and *wen* (文) through Xunzi.

Xunzi inherited the Confucian ideology, *ren* (仁), which is translated as ‘Humanity’. On the other hand, he tried to establish a harmonious society which would have accomplished Confucius’s purposes in establishing a social institution by stressing the origins of social evils. While Mengzi believed that we could realize an ideal society through faith in the goodness of human nature, Xunzi was not so optimistic. In the real world, we take numerous risks of being morally or socially misled. Moreover, when Xunzi arrived on the scene, people no longer dreamed of the Utopia that Mengzi had envisioned. Xunzi tried to create a politically ordered world by controlling the inner nature of man. He regarded the innate desire of man as the source of evil. The question was how to build a good world when there was no goodness in human nature. Xunzi looked for a way to turn the source of social evil toward the good by way of the sensible management of human desires rather than by denying them completely. He believed that it was possible to create an orderly world in spite of the evil desire innate in human nature, something that was proven by the emergence of saints. *Tian* (天), ‘Heaven’, the operation and order of nature, has provided us with a model. Although Heaven does not intervene in human affairs, we could have the world well-governed by utilizing the human mind, *xin* (心), which tends to follow ‘tian’.

According to Xunzi, the physical foundation that Heaven, *tian*, provides people with is *tianyang* (天養), ‘Heaven’s cultivation’ and the practical management of *tianyang* is *tianzheng* (天政), ‘Heaven’s politics’. He stressed that the foundation of practical management lies in ‘courteous ritual’, *liyi* (禮義). It is, Xunzi explained, the function of culture, *wen* (文) that supports the completion of ritual. He also linked the practice of the *liyi* to the operation of nature, which could be
called ‘li (理)’. Thus, it could be said that Xunzi inherited the Confucian idea of ‘culture (文)’ and elaborated it into theories.

2 Life of Xunzi

Xunzi (325–238 BCE) was born in Zhao (趙) during China’s Warring States period. His name was Kuang (況), but after his death he was called Sunqing (孫卿). In his youth, he studied in Qi (齊) and once served as the highest official of an academic institute, the Jixia (稷下). He also visited Qin (秦), about which I will come back to later. Xunzi spent his final years in Chu (楚) as a nofficial of Lanling (蘭陵) and passed away a few years after completing the book Xunzi. Lisi (李斯), the minister of the First Emperor of Qin, Qinshihuang (秦始皇), and Han Fei Zi (韓非子), who formed the theory of Legalism, studied as his pupils.

It was during his lifetime that the conflict and division of China’s civil era reached its height, prompting many vicious battles between states. The wars in this period were different from those at the time of Confucius and Mengzi. Once Xunzi visited Qin (秦) and was granted a face-to-face discussion with King Zhao of Qin (秦昭王).¹ He asserted the importance and usefulness of Ru (儒), Confucianism with historical examples. In B.C. 260, however, King Zhao destroyed the kingdom of Zhao (趙), Xunzi’s native country, and executed its entire army even though they had surrendered. According to records in Shiji (史記), written by Sima Qian (司馬遷), the number of severed heads was almost 400,000. It was at such a time that Xunzi remained an advocate of Confucius’s philosophy.

Having witnessed this brutal historic scene, Xunzi wanted to resolve the extreme chaos deeply rooted in society. He believed that bringing goodness to the world would be impossible without a proper understanding or control of evil human nature. This is why he fiercely attacked Mengzi, who positioned himself as Confucius’s successor:

Some of these men only roughly model themselves on the former kings and do not understand their overall system. ... Such is the crime of Zi and Meng Ke.²

He ruthlessly criticized the theorists who he thought deluded people with their biased ideas.

¹ King Zhao of Qin (秦昭王: 325–251 BCE. Reign 306–251 BCE).
² Ch. 6 Against the twelve masters “略法先王而不知其統，猶然而猶材劇志大，...是則子思孟軻之罪也.” Meng Ke (孟軻) is Mengzi’s name.
Mozi was fixated on the useful and did not understand the value of good form. Song Xing was fixated on having few desires and did not understand the value of achieving their objects. Shen Dao was fixated on laws and did not understand the value of having worthy people. Shen Buhai was fixated on power and did not understand the value of having wise people. Huizi was fixated on wording and did not understand the value of what is substantial. Zhuangzi was fixated on the heavenly and did not understand the value of the human.¹

Then, what is Xunzi’s definition of goodness, and where does good conduct come from? His answer is that it comes from “the conscious and artificial activity (僞) of controlling human nature. “People’s nature is bad. Their goodness is a matter of deliberate effort”.⁴

3 Human nature

According to Xunzi, we need to acknowledge the fact that human beings are born with desire and strive to fulfill it, which drives society into confusion and poverty.

Humans are born having desires. When they have desires but do not get the objects of their desire, then they cannot but seek some means of satisfaction. If there is no measure of limit to their seeking, then they cannot help but struggle with each other. If they struggle with each other then there will be chaos, and if there is chaos then they will be impoverished.⁵

This is the basic assumption behind Xunzi’s criticism of Mengzi, who believes in the good nature of human beings.⁶

However, the denial of the goodness of human nature creates a problem with Xunzi’s prior statement on human nature even while asserting the importance of ethics and morals. That makes it hard for Xunzi to answer the question of how sages could emerge. From where does li (禮), which trains sages and ‘noble men’ (君子), come, and who defines such people? According to Xunzi, Heaven never interferes with human affairs. Therefore, ‘human activity’ (人僞) should

3 Ch. 21 Undoing fixation “墨子蔽於用而不知文, 宋子蔽於欲而不知得, 慶子蔽於法而不知賢, 申子蔽於勢而不知知, 惠子蔽於辭而不知實, 莊子蔽於天而不知人.”
4 Ch. 23 Human nature is bad “人之性惡, 其善者僞也.”
5 Ch. 19 Discourse of Ritual “禮起於何也? 曰: 人生而有欲, 欲而不得, 則不能無求。求而無度量分界, 則不能不爭; 爭則亂, 亂則窮.”
6 Ch. 23 “孟子曰, 人之性善。曰, 是不然.” “Mencius says: people’s nature is good. I say: this is not so.”
be built upon the presumption of recognizing the goodness of human nature. So, there are problems in Xunzi’s theories on human nature and education. First, if everybody is endowed with an evil nature, how could it be that sages emerged in this world? Second, if everybody is given a chance to reach a certain level through learning, why is it that only a tiny number of sages and noble men manage to internalize the right order and live up to it? How can we reconcile human nature with ‘ritual education’ (禮) and ‘humanistic activities’ (人僞)?

There is a conversation regarding this subject in chapter 23 Xing’e (性惡: ‘Human nature is bad’) of his book, in which he faces the question: “If human nature is evil, from where does ritual and justice sprout?” The following is his answer:

In every case, ritual and yi are produced from the deliberate effort of the sage; they are not produced from people’s nature. Thus, when the potter mixes up clay and makes vessels, the vessels are produced from the deliberate efforts of the craftsman; they are not produced from people’s nature. Thus, when the craftsman carves wood and makes utensils, the utensils are produced from the deliberate efforts of the craftsman; they are not produced from people’s nature. The sage accumulates reflections and thoughts and practices deliberate efforts and reasoned activities in order to produce ritual and yi and in order to establish proper models and measures. So, ritual and yi and proper models and measures are produced from the deliberate efforts of the sage; they are not produced from people’s nature.

For the following question: “Why is it that only sages reach that level while a majority of people do not?”, Xunzi’s answer given above may be paraphrased in this way: the desire for profit exists in everyone. But the evil in human nature that Xunzi deals with is not absolute selfishness. The reason he says human nature is evil is that desire has an anarchistic outcome that results from the dissonance between selfish individuals and selfless social relationships. A well-educated person, however, would wish for order within society. It is possible to alter human nature through rigorous reasoning and accumulated efforts, and this is why morality and ethics can be created by the conscious efforts of sages. Therefore, in theory, even the man on the street can be a sage like Yu

7 Kline/Ivanhoe (2000), 155–175.
8 Ch. 23 “問者曰，人之性惡，則禮義惡生?”
9 Ch. 23 “應之曰，凡禮義者，是生於聖人之僞，非故生於人之性也。... 聖人積思慮，習僞故，以生禮義而起法度，然則禮義法度者，是生於聖人之僞，非故生於人之性也。”
10 Ch. 23 “曰，聖可積而致，然而皆不可積，何也?”
(禹), the legendary wise king in ancient China. Moreover, every human being is born with the talent and tools to recognize the pattern (理) of ethics.

Thus, it is clear that the material for understanding these things and the equipment for practicing them is present in people on the streets. Now if people on the streets were to use their material for understanding these things and the equipment for practicing them to base themselves upon the knowable patterns and practicable aspects of ren and yi, then is it clear that anyone on the streets could become a Yu.

In other words, every human being can reach that level, but most fail—this is why society exists in chaos.

Seen from this perspective, Xunzi’s and Mencius’s understandings of human beings are not much different, except for a different view on whether to trust or distrust their nature. For Xunzi, the evil in human desire, which is given by Heaven, is neutral like natural environments that have to be controlled. Thus, when it comes to human nature, Xunzi tries carefully to reconcile nature (性) and artifice (僞). “When human nature and deliberate effort unite, then all under Heaven becomes ordered.” In his theory, human nature and artificial culture, therefore, both contribute to create an orderly world.

4 Mind and Heaven

For Xunzi, nature and mind are totally different concepts. Nature is prone to be weakened by desire but mind is able of confronting and controlling it. He believed that if humans can rule their desire, they can succeed in making the world a more peaceful and ordered place. However, Xunzi refuses to reduce desire or eliminate it, unlike Songjian (宋鈃) and Laozi (老子), who preached that we should do so. He utilizes Zhuangzi (莊子)’s vocabulary in explaining the human mind, for instance his metaphors comparing mind to pure water or a mirror. “How do people know the Way? I say: with the heart. How does the

11 Ch. 23 "塗之人可以為禹, 昀謂也? 曰, 凡禹之所以為禹者, 以其為仁義法正也. 然則仁義法正有可知可能之理, 皆有可以知仁義法正之質, 皆有可以能仁義法正之具, 然則其可以為禹明矣.”
12 Ch. 23 "然則其可以知之質, 可以能之具, 其在塗之人明矣. 今使塗之人者, 以其可以知之質, 可以能之具, 本夫仁義法正之可知可能之理, 可能之具, 然則其可以為禹明矣.”
13 Ch. 23 “曰, 可以而不可使也.” “I say, they can do it, but they cannot be made to do it.”
14 Ch. 19 “性僞合而天下治.”
15 Kline/Ivanhoe (2000), Ch. 8.
heart know the Way? I say: it is through emptiness, single-mindedness, and stillness.”

So in Xunzi’s text, a man who attempts self-mastery as a means to control desire is analogous to Heaven. Heaven represents looking into the human world while not interfering with it. “There is constancy to the activities of Heaven. They do not persist because of Yao (堯), a respectable sage. They do not perish because of Jie (桀), a vicious tyrant”. But “if you respond to them with order, then you will have good fortune. If you respond to them with chaos, then you will have misfortune”. Human greatness lies in man’s capacity to participate in the works of Heaven, assisting it to shape the world to achieve more order. In other words, it is human greatness that completes the triad (三才) along with Heaven and Earth.

Heaven has its proper seasons, Earth has its proper resources, and humankind has its proper order – this is called being able to form a triad.

Therefore in Xunzi’s theory the distinction between the Heaven that has the will to prosper the human world and the one that has natural order is not clear. While he shows reverence for the holiness of Heaven, Xunzi also criticizes those who unduly worship and interpret heavenly signs, or natural disasters, rather than simply following its guidance and ways. His opinion is that natural disasters are simply unexplainable events and nothing to be feared.

On the other hand, Xunzi emphasizes the fact that a myriad of things are ruled and governed by Heaven, and that the role of human beings is to learn how this works and to form their society according to it. Such an analogy of the heavens and human beings is demonstrated in Xunzi’s work when he uses terms like tianjun (天君), which means ‘Heaven’s leadership’, tianguan (天官), ‘Heaven’s management’, tianyang (天養), ‘Heaven’s cultivation’, and tianzheng (天政), ‘Heaven’s politics’.

The abilities of eyes, ears, nose, mouth, and body each have their respective objects and are not able to assume each other’s abilities – these are called one’s heavenly faculties. The heart dwells in the central cavity so as to control the five faculties – this is called one’s

16 Ch. 21 “人何以知道？曰，心。心何以知？曰，虛壹而靜。”
17 Ch. 17 Discourse on Heaven “天行有常，不爲堯存，不爲桀亡。應之以治則吉，應之以亂則凶。”
18 Ch. 17 “天有其時，地有其財，人有其治，夫是之謂能參。”
19 Ch. 17 “夫星之隊，木之鳴，是天地之變，陰陽之化，物之罕至者也。怪之，可也。而畏之，非也。”
“The falling of stars and the groaning of trees are simply rarely occurring things among the changes in Heaven and Earth and the transformations of yin and yang (陰陽). To marvel at them is permissible, but to fear them is wrong”.

"天行有常,不為堯存,不為桀亡。應之以治則吉,應之以亂則凶。”
Heavenly lord. Using what is not of one’s kind as a resource for nourishing what is of one’s kind – this is one’s Heavenly nourishment. To be in accordance with what is proper for one’s kind is called happiness, and to go against what is proper for one’s kind is called disaster – this is called one’s Heavenly government.²⁰

Such is what he viewed as the correct conduct that humans should observe in life.²¹ Heaven and Earth give birth to men, and in turn, men should maintain the way of Heaven and Earth, and participate in it.²² Then how can human beings maintain the ways of Heaven? The answer is by ‘giving the right patterns to things (理物)’ and ‘trying not to lose them (勿失之)’:

To long for things and appraise them – how can this compare to ordering things and never losing them? To desire that from which things arise – how can this compare to taking hold of that by which things are completed? Thus, if one rejects what lies with man and instead longs for what lies with Heaven, then one will have lost grasp of the disposition of the myriad things.²³

This order, *liwu er wushizhi* (理物而勿失之), signifies the creation and imposition of a pattern for every object. The meaning of *li* (理), “pattern”, refers to the creation of the righteous pattern of an appropriate relationship between father and son, king and subjects. Social order is formed by the human creation of patterns out of things. Xunzi says that the birth of ‘ritual and *yi* (禮儀)’ is based on such universal order.²⁴ This is why ‘ritual and *yi* (禮儀)’ are regarded as the root of world order.

The Way of the former kings consists in exalting *ren*. One must cling to what is central in carrying it out. What do I mean by ‘what is central?’ I say: it is ritual and *yi*.²⁵

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²⁰ Ch. 17 “耳目口形能各有接而不相能也，各是之謂天官。心居中虚，以治五官，各是之謂天君。財非其類以養其類，財是之謂天養。順其類者謂之福，逆其類者謂之戮，財是之謂天政。”
²¹ Ch. 8 The achievements of the Ru “道者，非天之道，非地之道，人之所以道也，君子之所道也。”
²² Ch. 9 The rule of a true king “故天地生君子，君子理天地；君子者，天地之參也，萬物之摠也，民之父母也”.
²³ Ch. 17 “思物而物之，孰與理物而勿失之也！願於物之所以生，孰與有物之所以成！故錯人而思天，則失萬物之情”.
²⁴ Ch. 19 "禮有三本。天地者，生之本也”.
²⁵ Ch. 8 “先王之道，人之隆也，比中而行之，曷謂中？曰，禮義是也”.
5 Moral cultivation: Meaning of Li (禮), Ritual

Ritual (禮) is not only designed according to Heaven’s operations, but also supports human beings by provoking their will to learn.

By ritual, Heaven and Earth harmoniously combine; by ritual, the sun and the moon radiantly shine; by ritual, the four seasons in progression arise; by ritual, the stars move orderly across the skies; by ritual, the great rivers through their courses flow; by ritual, the myriad things all thrive and grow; by ritual, for love and hate proper measure is made; by ritual, on joy and anger fit limits are laid.²⁶

Men train themselves through the incorporeal elements of li (禮) and complete the world’s order through the order of li. This, in turn, elevates the entire order of the universe and nature.

“And so, ritual serves Heaven above and Earth below, it honors forefathers and ancestors, and it exalts lords and teachers.” “Music, moreover, is unchanging harmony, and ritual is unalterable order. Music unites that which is the same, and ritual distinguishes that which is different. Together the combination of ritual and music governs the human heart.”²⁷

Human beings are destined to be born with desire, but if they learn to control it through li, they can control both desire and things.

“The former kings hated such chaos, and so they established rituals and yi (禮義) in order to divide things among people, to nurture their desires, and to satisfy their seeking. They caused desires never to exhaust material goods, and material goods never to be depleted by desires, so that the two support each other and prosper. This is how ritual arose.”²⁸

As a countermeasure used to control this nature, Xunzi focuses on the powers of rituals. He believes that the will for ‘righteousness’ (義) is a critical characteristic of human beings.

Water and fire have qi (氣) but are without life. Grasses and trees have life but are without awareness. Birds and beasts have awareness but are without yi (義). Humans have qi and life and awareness, and moreover they have yi. And so they are the most precious things

²⁶ Ch. 19 “天地以合，日月以明，四時以序，星辰以行，江河以流，萬物以昌，好惡以節，喜怒以當”.
²⁷ Ch. 19 “故禮，上事天，下事地，尊先祖，而隆君師”。Ch. 20 Discourse on music “且樂也者，和之不可變者也，禮也者，理之不可易者也。樂合同，禮別異，禮樂之統，管乎人心矣。”
²⁸ Ch. 9 “先王惡其亂也，故制禮義以分之，以養人之欲，給人之求。使欲必不窮於物，物必不屈於欲。兩者相持而不長，是禮之所起也”.

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under Heaven. They are not as strong as oxen or as fast as horses, but oxen and horses are used by them. How is this so? I say it is because humans are able to form communities while the animals cannot. Why are humans able to form communities? I say it is because of social divisions. How can social divisions be put into practice? I say it is because of yì. And so if they use yì in order to make social divisions, then they will be harmonized. If they are harmonized, then they will be unified. If they are unified, then they will have more force. If they have more force, then they will be strong. If they are strong, then they will be able to overcome the animals. And so they can get to live in homes and palaces. Thus, the reason why humans can order themselves with the four seasons, control the myriad things, and bring benefit to all under Heaven is none other than that they are able to get these social divisions and yì. ²⁹

And human life cannot be without community. If humans form communities but are without social divisions, then they will struggle. If they struggle, then there will be chaos. But the righteousness mentioned here is the kind that supports ‘division’ (分). If there is no division that draws a line between grades and classes, conflict and chaos will naturally rise.

The myriad things share the same cosmos and have different bodies. They have no intrinsic fittingness but are useful for humans. This is simply the arrangement of the world. Various grades of people live together. They share the same pursuits but have different ways. They share the same desires but have different understandings. This is simply the way they are born. ³⁰

To prevent this, Xunzi suggests distinctions and labor division. What he intends to say is that for an ordered society, people’s desires should be divided into different levels of hierarchy, prompting them to satisfy their needs according to their classes.

In ritual, noble and lowly have their proper ranking, elder and youth have their proper distance, poor and rich, humble and eminent, each has their proper weight. Thus the Son of Heaven wears a red dragon-robe and a high ceremonial cap. The feudal lords wear black dragon-robcs and high ceremonial caps. The grand officers wear lesser robes and high ceremonial caps. The regular officers wear fur caps and plain robes. One’s virtue must have a matching position, one’s position must have a matching salary, and one’s salary must have

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²⁹ Ch. 9 “水火有氣而無生，草木有生而無知，禽獸有知而無義，人有氣、有生、有知，亦且有義，故最為天下貴也。力不若牛，走不若馬，而牛馬為用，何也？曰，人能群，彼不能群也。人何以能群？曰，分。分何以能行？曰，義。故義以分則和，和則一，一則多力，多力則彊，彊則勝物，故宮室可得而居也。故序時四時，裁萬物，兼利天下，無它故焉，得之分義也”.

³⁰ Ch. 10 “萬物同字而異體，無宜而有用為人，數也。人倫並處，同求而異道，同欲而異知，生也，皆有可也，知愚同，所可異也，知愚分”.
matching uses. The officers on up must be regulated by ritual and music. The masses and the commoners must be controlled by legal arrangements.³¹

For Xunzi, however, the division is not a tool to induce discrimination and competition but a way to eradicate them. Although gradation was his solution to realize a better society, Xunzi wanted to purify emotions and make a harmonious world through li. The reason people needed li was that there had to be a system that helped them regain humanity and purify their emotions rather than excessively pursuing desire or painfully restraining themselves from it.

In every case, ritual begins in that which must be released, reaches full development in giving it proper form, and finishes in providing it satisfaction. And so when ritual is at its most perfect, the requirements of inner dispositions and proper form are both completely fulfilled. At its next best, the dispositions and outer form overcome one another in succession. Its lowest manner is to revert to the dispositions alone so as to subsume everything in this grand unity.³²

Such belief is clearly shown in Xunzi’s explanation of rituals for ancestors, ancestral rites, and death rituals. In his theory, rituals for Heaven and Earth are deeply related to ancestral rites. When explaining the relationship between rituals and controlling human emotions, Xunzi mentions the necessity of rituals especially for those still alive who have to cope with death.³³

Death is one of the most emotionally difficult experiences humans endure in life. Children of parents that have passed away have to cope with such an event in an appropriate way. Refusing to acknowledge it or turning one’s head away because of fear are not wise ways to do this. This is why raising awareness and preparing for it through ritual training are important.³⁴

One can ask the question at this point of how symbols used in rituals should be internalized. Xunzi linked the ability to make ritual symbols and interpret them to the wen (文), “embellishment.” If such symbols are appropriately used, humans can attain ways to live in order and harmony, as done heavenly. Such paths are identified as wen (文), embellishments, ‘wei (僞)’, human artifice, and ‘li (禮)’, ritual.

³¹ Ch. 10 “禮者，貴賤有等，長幼有差，貧富輕重，皆有稱者也。故天子號冠冕，諸侯玄冠衣裳，大夫裨冕，士弁弁服，德必稱位，位必稱祿，祿必稱用，由士以上則必以禮樂節之，眾庶百姓則必以法數制之。”
³² Ch. 19 “故人一之於禮義，則兩得之矣。一之於情性，則兩喪之矣。故儒者將使人兩得之者也，墨者將使人兩喪之者也，是儒墨之分也。”
³³ Kline/Tiwald (2014) Ch. 4.
In every case, ritual begins in that which must be released, reaches full development in giving it proper form, and finishes in providing it satisfaction. And so when ritual is at its most perfect, the requirements of inner dispositions and proper form are both completely fulfilled.\(^{35}\)

6 Conclusion

6.1 The assertions of Xunzi (荀子): Overcoming the chaos and disorder of his era

First, in nature, humans are far from good. There are no limits to human desire, and if left uncontrolled, society will fall into chaos and conflict. Those who do not acknowledge this should be harshly criticized because they are wrong.

Second, how can we build a good world when there is no goodness underlying human nature? The answer: through sages, Heaven, and consciousness of mind.

Third, what should we do to make a righteous world? The answer: establish an ordered society through conducting rituals, \textit{li} (禮).

6.2 Xunzi’s Confucianism: Ritual as morals to control human nature

Mencius’s ethical utopia has to depend on human nature, which in Xunzi’s opinion has no promise and is an extremely optimistic viewpoint. The real world is brimming with chaos and danger. In Xunzi’s era, there was no room for a utopia.

Therefore Xunzi was more interested in how to overcome the prevalent evil of his time. He said that human beings were born with desire, which he believed was the root of all evil. But rather than completely denying it, he wanted to shift society from evil to good by acknowledging and effectively managing it. Although human nature is based on evil desire, it was possible for humans to maintain a state of mind that endows the world with order. This served as the basis for mankind to achieve a stable world, with Heaven looking down on the human world rather than directly interfering with it. Xunzi defined all things given to human beings as ‘Heaven’s cultivation’ (天養) and the men practically managing them as ‘Heaven’s politics’ (天政). This practical management was fulfilled through ‘ritual’, \textit{li} (禮). Therefore the roots of ritual are part of Heaven’s cul-

\(^{35}\) Ch. 19 “凡禮, 始乎悅, 成乎文, 終乎悅校. 故至備, 情文俱盡.”
tivation and the practical conduct of ritual stems from Heaven’s politics. Xunzi explains the roots of ritual with reference to the functions of ‘culture, embellishment’ (文), links conduct to patterns that follow the ways of nature, and asserts the importance of ruling the real world through ‘ritual and yi’ (禮儀).