

Not in Two Minds
*Philosophy of Mind and Action in Zhū Xī's
(1130-1200) Interpretations of the Counsels of
the Great Yu*

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-Philosophy of Mind and Action in Zhū Xī's (1130-1200)

Interpretations of the Counsels of the Great Yu

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Abstract

One of Zhu Xi's (1130-1200) most important texts, the *Preface to the Mean and Commonality* 中庸序 (date of composition: 1189) is organised as a long recontextualisation and commentary on a sixteen character long passage from the *Old Text Shangshu* 古文尚書. His commentary tantalisingly describes the text as telling us something of importance regarding the nature of the mind and its role in one's interactions with the world. What he there writes has typically been interpreted as espousing an ideal of strict self-denial and a subjugation of the self to moral laws.

This thesis argues that his meaning is almost precisely the opposite; by reading of the *Preface* in light of near-contemporary discussions of the text with his students. It argues that Zhu in the *Preface* elaborates a responsive theory of the mind and on that basis a theory of moral action as moral responsiveness. His responsive theory of the mind sets out to describe the sorts of things that give shape to one's responses to the outside world; this includes the state of one's body, brute contingency and most importantly one's moral nature. The theory of moral action developed on this basis is one that seeks to describe how one can avoid being a victim of the whims of fate, and even in the most adverse conditions lead a flourishing life; not free from contingency but in a creative co-existence with it.

The way this thesis achieves this result is by taking the commentary form seriously; where previous interpreters have assumed Zhu to be a systematic philosopher deriving doctrines from abstract principles, this thesis reconstructs what Zhu says as attempts to interpret a text. It does this in three steps, divided over three chapters: It first reconstructs the lively debate that was taking place during the Northern and Southern Song Dynasties on precisely how to interpret the passage from the *Counsels of the Great Yu*; it then reconstructs the assumptions Zhu ascribes to the text by interpreting several arguments Zhu makes as arguments for a particular reading of a text; in the last chapter these assumptions are read back into the *Shangshu* text through the lens of several illustrations Zhu uses to arrive at the picture of responsive action described above.

Acknowledgements

More than anyone, I would like to express the profoundest gratitude to my supervisor, Halvor Eifring, professor of Chinese at the University of Oslo. The care, patience and generosity with which he has treated me throughout the process of writing this thesis has been of an immeasurable help. Halvor's ability to subtly prod one into figuring out what one's good ideas are, and then to provoke one into finding what would be good reasons for thinking them true are abilities that every teacher should aspire to. I notice that some of my fellow students are worried before meetings with their supervisors, but I always looked forward to mine and will miss being able to call hour-long conversations with Halvor 'work'.

I also like to thank my fellow students and co-workers Guttorm Gundersen, for helping me find materials I didn't even know I was looking for; and Gunnar Sjøstedt for the heroic effort he put into making one of the chapters of this thesis more readable, and both of them collectively for making life in the reading room intellectually stimulating.

I would further like to extend my deepest thanks to the Reading Group of Classical Chinese at IKOS. Meeting weekly to bicker over the details of grammar and intellectual history may not be everyone's idea of a good time, so it is astounding that so many of us have found our way to UiO at the same time (and the parties have really been something else!).

Last, but not least, I would like to thank Ami Mo 阿覓莫 for her support and care throughout the process, and for introducing me to the joys of the Sichuanese dialect.

One would have hoped that with so many people to thank there would be someone to blame as well. Unfortunately, the shortcomings of this thesis, most of which I know all too well, are entirely a result of my own limitations.

-Anders Sydskjør, May 30th 2016

Abbreviations

SSJZ *The Collected Commentaries on the Four Books* 四書集注章句

ZZWJ *The Collected Writings of Zhu Xi* 朱子文集

ZZYL *The Classified Conversations of Zhu Xi* 朱子語類

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1 Introduction

1.1 Subject and Scope

The Song dynasty, from the northern to the southern, was a period of fierce intellectual activity, and one of the more hotly debated topics of the day was the nature of the mind and its role in moral action. Or rather; one of the most hotly debated topics of the day was how several texts of varying degrees of antiquity were to be understood as regards these topics. This thesis will discuss one such interpretation of one such text. During the Northern Song, a whole discourse began to form around a passage from the chapter *Counsels of the Great Yu* 大禹謨 in the *Old Text Shangshu* 古文尚書 consisting of a mere sixteen characters that were taken to say something of importance about what stands in the way of one becoming a mature moral agent, what enabling factors exist for one to become a mature moral agent and to suggest a way of proceeding towards that aim. These sixteen characters are the following:

人心惟危，道心惟微，惟精惟一，允執厥中¹

The mind of man is perilous; the mind of the Way is subtle; you must rarefy and unify them; steadfastly hold to this Mean!

What so interested several generations of Chinese thinkers was the use of the terms ‘the mind of man’ (*rénxīn* 人心) and ‘the mind of the Way’ (*dàoxīn* 道心) to which a great many different frameworks were applied to make sense of the relative peril and subtlety of these ‘two minds’. As far as later influence is concerned and in terms of the complexity of the interpretive resources mobilised in making sense of the original text, it seems safe to say that the Song-portion of this history of interpretation reached its highpoint with Zhu Xi (1130-1200) and it is his thoughts that will be our subject. Our main focus will be the intricate story Zhu tells about the, for lack of a better word, structure and nature of the mind and its role in moral action when interpreting the text. In telling this story, our goal will be to answer the following two questions:

1. How does Zhu, in these texts, construe the nature of the mind?
2. How does he, in these texts, construe the nature of moral action?

¹ Quoted from SSZJJZ, p. 14

The answers we will give to these questions are, *contra* a widespread perception in the literature, Zhu has a *responsive* model of the mind; this is to say that what he thinks the mind would do even if it did nothing else is to respond to situations. On the basis of this responsive model of the mind, he works out a responsive theory of action; this is to say that mature, intentional, moral action is construed as a response to a situation, what divides the better from the worse is the understanding of the situation expressed by that response. We may contrast this with a *representational* model of the mind, where what the mind would be doing even if it did nothing else is to have representations (of the world, of truths etc.). This is roughly the model of the mind that dominated Western philosophy from Descartes to somewhere in the previous century. In the philosophy of action, such models tend to deal in beliefs, desires and intentions to explain action and focus on the *deliberative* aspect of acting.²

This focus on the mind and moral action means that this study aims to contribute to the growing scholarly discourse on virtue ethics and moral psychology in pre-modern Chinese thought³. On the other, as we will be focusing on how these thoughts are formulated, namely as a commentary on another text, it attempts to make a contribution to our understanding of the business of doing philosophy in pre-modern China⁴.

This is not how the Zhu we will meet in our texts has been read in the modern scholarly literature, however. In fact, I would claim that the scholarly consensus misconstrues his thoughts on both these points: he is read as a systematic philosopher (not a philosophical commentator) who cares about perception (not responses). This thesis hopes to correct this.

In this introduction, I will do the following things: First, I will introduce the texts we will be spending the rest of the thesis discussing, their dates, context and nature; having done this, I will describe the ‘state of the art’ which will result in some theoretical and methodological reflections; when this is done we will be in a fine state to both clarify our research questions above and describe how each of the chapters in this thesis contribute to answering them.

² It is an interesting thing to find common cause with someone who thinks Chinese thought stopped being Chinese with the introduction of Buddhism, nonetheless, my argument here is in many ways similar to that of Hansen 1992 pp. 14-22, apart from the fact that he is dead wrong in his blanket ascription of a representational model of the mind to Neo Confucian thinkers.

³ E.g. Van Norden 2007, Angle 2010, Angle and Slote (ed.) 2013 and Makeham (ed.) 2010

⁴ Here the literature is far thinner, inspirations for this study are Wagner’s two studies of Wang Bi 王弼, 2000 and 2003, Makeham’s study of commentaries on the *Analects*, 2003, and the recently published Gentz and Meier (eds.) 2015

1.2 Texts and Contexts

The story of what is often called Neo-Confucianism⁵ is sometimes told in something like the following way: Following a gradual decline during the Han, Confucian thought went into a great recession, giving way to various kinds of Buddhism and Daoism. During the Tang, some inklings of Confucianism making a comeback could be felt in thinkers like Han Yu and Li Ao. Then, during the Northern Song, something profoundly new began to happen, first with such cosmologically inclined, Daoist-influenced thinkers as Zhou Dunyi and Zhang Zai⁶, and then with a veritable philosophical revolution with the two brothers Cheng Hao and Cheng Yi, one-time students of Zhou, and nephews of Zhang, who combined a Buddhist-influenced interest in metaphysics with a Confucian interest in ethics. After this, not much happened for almost a generation until Zhu Xi combined the thought of the four masters of the Northern Song to create a great Neo-Confucian synthesis.

The above story owes a lot to one of its central protagonists, namely Zhu Xi⁷ himself, and his students, although, in allowing for influences outside of ‘orthodox Confucian thought’ the above narrative is an improvement over Zhu’s. It nonetheless fails to do justice to several matters of great importance: Chiefly, as I said initially, the Song dynasty, northern to southern, was a tremendously active intellectual period in Chinese history, not just among the select thinkers Zhu favoured, but in a more general way; several formative texts of Chan Buddhism were written at this time and several different varieties of Confucianism were formulated, not all of which shared Zhu’s admiration for the ‘four masters’ of the Northern Song. Even among thinkers who, like Zhu, had a deep admiration for the Cheng brothers and could their trace ‘teacher-lineages’ back to them displayed a greater variety than Zhu would allow for.

In this study, we will be placing Zhu within a different context; one consisting of interpretations of the sixteen characters from the *Counsels of the Great Yu* that we quoted at the beginning. *That* historical context will allow us to see how the above familiar narrative of Neo Confucian thought is, with regard to the Zhu Xi we will meet at least, patently false. We will see Zhu being deeply influenced by Su Shi, that great poet of the Northern Song; and we will see him reject as silly the interpretation of his hero, Cheng Yi. What is a bit humorous is

⁵ This name has been the subject of some discussion and disagreement, with Tillman 1992 arguing, seemingly quite successfully that the more useful term is ‘the *daoxue* fellowship’

⁶ Depending on who’s telling the story, Shao Yong, neighbour of the other four in Luoyang, is also mentioned.

⁷ Adler 2014 shows how it was a far from uncontroversial move to have high regard for Zhou Dunyi, a relatively obscure figure until Zhu made a serious effort to make him widely known. Tillman 2011 shows the rich variety of thinkers in what he calls the ‘*daoxue* fellowship’ during the Southern Song.

that one of the sources of the familiar narrative *is* one of the texts we will be studying, so this idea of ‘Neo Confucian insularity’⁸ breaks down in one of its original formulations. That tale will be the subject of chapter 2 of this thesis; our present task is to introduce the texts we will be spending the rest of this study thinking very carefully about.

Texts

Our primary objects of study in this thesis are four texts: Zhu’s *Preface to the Paragraph and Passage Commentary on the Mean and Commonality* 中庸章句序 (Henceforth simply the *Preface* or *Preface to the Mean*); a record from the *Classified Sayings of Master Zhu* 朱子語類⁹ portraying a discussion with a student that took place in 1191; and two letters from the same year to another student of his. Listed like this, they no doubt appear as quite a motley crew; I will now describe some details particular to each and then describe how they come together to make up a greater unity.

The *Preface* is by far the most widely read of Zhu’s commentaries on the sixteen characters¹⁰ we quoted at the outset and because of the narrative they are there made to participate in, they are often called ‘the sixteen character mind transmission’ (and henceforth ‘the mind transmission’ refers to those sixteen characters). We can be fairly certain it was his most widely read, for as part of Zhu’s *Collected commentaries and Paragraph and Passage Commentaries on Four Books* 四書集注章句, it was made part of the curriculum for the civil service examination 科舉 in 1313 a position it and the other of the *Four Books* maintained until 1905¹¹.

As a part of my argument for the unity of these texts relies on closeness in time, some things have to be said about the dating of the *Preface*. In standard editions¹² the date of is given September 15. 1989, it is also often held to have been printed that same year and that

⁸ The thought that for interpreting Neo Confucian thinkers, the main context in which to see any one of them is that of other Neo Confucian thinkers.

⁹ A collection of conversations and saying by Zhu recorded by his students. It was edited, with the records organised into categories (*lei* 類) by a certain Li Jingde 黎靖德 in 1270 on the basis of several earlier collections. See ZZYL, Vol. 1., p.7

¹⁰ 人心惟危，道心惟微，惟精惟一，允執厥中

The mind of man is perilous; the mind of the Way is subtle; you must rarefy and unify them; steadfastly hold to this Mean!

¹¹ See Chan 1990, p. 8

¹² E.g. SSZJJZ, p. 16

the edition that has come down to us is the same text. However, in one of our other texts¹³ claims that he had since rewritten it (perhaps to correspond with his reprinting of all the commentaries on *The Four Books* in 1192¹⁴), which leaves it to some extent open whether the text we are seeing is the one discussed in the letters and in the ZZYL-record.

As a source for the sort of thinking we are interested in in this thesis, the *Preface* has some shortcomings; as we will see in the following chapter, the text is a polemical tract directed against political and ideological opponents and so not a place for cool-headed reflection. The part of the preface dedicated to the topics of interest to this thesis is tantalising but very bare bones. One wanting enlightenment on these topics will have look elsewhere.

For this help we need to look at several texts that together make up something of a dialogue: A ZZYL-record made in 1191 by Zhu's student Yu Daya 余大雅¹⁵, or at any rate portraying a meeting that would have taken place in 1191. The occasion for the discussion, the text says, is a letter sent from another student, called Zheng Kexue 鄭可學 (courtesy name: Zishang 子上)¹⁶. What is so peculiar about these texts is precisely that Zheng and Yu don't seem to 'get it', requiring Zhu to explain the matter several times over, finding ever new ways of putting his points.

Our main text in the following chapters is in many ways the ZZYL-record, which contains the most explanations and examples. Yet this text must also be complemented, as the text is frequently unclear about whose views are being reported; Zhu's own, Zheng's or someone else's. In solving this problem, two of Zhu's letters to Zheng¹⁷ are of infinite value; they too contain extensive quotations from Zheng's letters (which unfortunately are no longer extant), but where Zhu in the ZZYL-record is happy to go out on fairly extensive tangents (causing the difficulty in ascribing views), he in the letters follows a strict pattern om

¹³ *Letter to Zheng Zishang 11*

¹⁴ Li and Hartman 2010, p. 446. Qian 2011, p. 213 is far more confident than me and declares the standard dating wrong.

¹⁵ Zhu's student since 1179 and prolific contributor to the ZZYL. For the date of the record, see Qian *ibid.* p. 208.

¹⁶ Had known Zhu since as also a fairly prolific contributor to the ZZYL. They apparently met while Zhu was at Zhangzhou, and the letters in question are dated by Chen Lai to after that meeting and after Zhu had left Zhangzhou. Zhu is reported to have had fairly high praises of him, apparently saying of the *Great Learning* he edited in 1200: 'I should like to present this book to someone, but only Zishang would be fitting match for it.' (quoted from Shu 2003, p. 877: '此書欲付得人，惟子上足當之') The same text also reports that those who heard Zhu thus praising Zheng found it strange.

¹⁷ *Letter to Zheng Zishang 10 and 11 與鄭子上十 and 十一* (ZZWJ, *juan xx*) where *Letter 11* is Zhu's reply to the letter by Zheng referred to in the ZZYL-record.

quotation and comment. This means that we can ascribe the views expressed by Zhu in the ZZYL-record, either to him or to Zheng, with much higher accuracy and confidence.

All this detail is fine and well, one may say, but what makes Zhu's views about 'the mind transmission' as recorded in the autumn of 1191 such a worthy object of study? In a sense the answer to this is: nothing in particular. A fuller answer is somewhat involved: The approach adopted here is meant as a solution to a problem that we will discuss in more detail below, namely that Zhu never wrote a philosophical *magnum opus*, ala Kant's *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* or Spinoza's *Ethica ordine geometrico demonstrata*. The closest we have, and certainly his most influential texts, are the commentaries on *The Four Books* and their prefaces. In the present case, the text in that collection is vague on the points that interest us. Yet we can, by reconstructing a discursive context, as I have attempted to go some way in doing in providing all these contextual details about the texts, recreate a single, cogent line of reasoning that can be used to explain the difficult points. In doing this we will be clearing up difficult points in the interpretation of one of the most widely read texts of the pre-modern world¹⁸. I will now briefly describe the content of Zhu's interpretation as it emerges in the *Preface*, describe what I take to be the points of difficulty and then proceed to describe how these points have been treated in previous research.

The content of the commentaries

While our aim is to understand what *claims* Zhu makes in interpreting, it is a peculiarity of his style of commentary that one has to get comfortable with a few technical terms. In our case, it comes when Zhu sets out to explain what is meant by the terms 'mind of man' (*rénxīn*) and 'mind of the Way' (*dàoxīn*). Zhu interprets quite audaciously by saying that there aren't two minds; what this distinction *really* comes to is that there is a kind of activity of the mind, called 'awareness' (*zhījué* 知覺) some of which originates in one's 'physical constitution' (*xíngqì* 形氣) and some of which originates in one's 'normative constitution' (*xìngmìng* 性命), so the way in which they are 'awareness' (*zhījué*) is not the same¹⁹. Of course, there is a great deal of surrounding discourse we will have to see this in light of, but in essence, the task of this thesis is to make sense of the preceding paragraph. The sense we will make is, in the broadest of strokes: 'Awareness' (*zhījué*) is a kind of response to a situation. The nature or

¹⁸ As it seems safe to say that each of the *Four Books* is.

¹⁹ *Preface*

quality of this response is conditioned by certain dynamic, underlying factors so as to give rise to responses which are either connected to one's physical state; the latter connected with one's own flourishing and that of those around one. These responses are intimately tied to one's course through life, and making oneself competent at responding to novel situations is what the difference between a flourishing and a miserable life consists in. In telling this more elaborate story, the three terms 'physical constitution' (*xíngqì*), 'normative constitution' (*xìngmìng*) and 'awareness' (*zhījué*) will be our points of departure. The reading I have presented above is a far cry from the received understanding and it is to this that we now turn.

1.3 Previous Research

In some ways, it makes little sense to speak of 'previous research', as no study exists that focuses on exactly the materials we will here be discussing and while certain *bon mots* from our ZZYL-record and the letters are quoted quite ubiquitously, it seems to me that they have never been treated as a coherent discourse. In fact, despite being an exceedingly rich source, much of the material we will be investigating from our ZZYL-record is for the most part unstudied.

There are roughly speaking two kinds of studies that overlap thematically with this one: Studies of the *Preface* that pay little if any attention to the moral psychology contained therein²⁰ and focus exclusively on the notions of 'tradition' or orthodoxy' they find therein; and philosophical studies that treat the terms 'mind of man' (*rénxīn*) and 'the mind of the Way' (*dàoxīn*) as terms of art in a philosophical system²¹ used to describe a moral psychology in which one makes oneself subservient to absolute moral laws and it seems the general understanding that Zhu is not commenting on a text; he is justifying a distinction by means of ancient authority. On detailed points, the term 'awareness' (*zhījué*) is quite consistently interpreted so as to strangely resemble the post-Cartesian term of art 'perception' (i.e. to have representation). On the Chinese side of the literature there is a widespread opinion that Zhu's 'distinction between the 'mind of man' and mind of the Way' (*rénxīn dàoxīn zhī fēn* 人心道心之分) is thus well understood.

²⁰ E.g. de Bary 1981 and Wilson 1995

²¹ E.g. Munro 1988, Chen 2000, Xie 2009, Meng 1989

There are several reasons to doubt this confidence and to reconsider the evidence. Recent work on virtue ethics in China²² has generally shown pre-modern Chinese thinkers to be less rule-obsessed rather than more; Steven Angle, for example, has shown very clearly the high premium Zhu placed on creativity in solving moral problems²³, which seems to stand in contradiction with self-denial in the face of a moral-law. Furthermore, the practice of ascribing systems of philosophy to any pre-modern thinker who uttered two coherent thoughts on an *a priori*-basis has shown to be questionable at best and to often drastically distort what thinkers so interpreted wrote at worst²⁴. In Zhu's case, while one sees the claim that there is such a thing as 'his system of philosophy' in almost all writings on him, I do not think the argument has ever been made, nor do I think it could be made to stand.

1.4 Methodological Reflections

As I said while describing the texts that will be discussed, my choice in texts, and the choice to attempt to carefully reconstruct something like discursive situation are both in part motivated by the absence of anything like a singular philosophical masterwork where doctrines are clearly formulated and carefully argued. I think the appeal to a 'system of categories' or 'system of philosophy', the latter kind of appeal being particularly widespread in the literature on Zhu. What I think the notion of a 'system' is meant to do (and I haven't seen anyone be particularly explicit about what they mean to say by appealing to this notion) is to justify inferences across texts that are sometimes years apart. The appeal to some sort of eternal conceptual realm of course achieves this, but at a fairly tall cost: I do not think one can pursue such an order of explanation, without also ascribing a systematic method²⁵ and if this is so, one begs the question as to what kind of method the philosopher in question employed in formulating his positions. A further cost is insensitivity to changes of heart; ideas are eternal, but human beings have from time to time been known to formulate new and

²² E.g. Angle 2010, Angle and Slote (eds.) 2013 and Van Norden 2007

²³ Angle 2010, pp. 93-11

²⁴ In Catana 2008

²⁵ What Catana 2008, p.3, based on a reading of the 16th and 17th century historians of philosophy who began using the concept, infers this method to consist in, is something like starting from a set of principles (It is unclear whether these are propositional or not) and deriving doctrines in various fields of philosophy from these (What the fields of philosophy are varies according to what philosophy is thought to consist in at the time the historian is writing). Another criterion is 'independence with regard to other 'systems of philosophy'', something that seems oddly fitting for much research on Neo Confucian thought.

interesting positions in response to a wide range of factors in their lives. This last point makes one vulnerable to ascribing contradictions to a thinker who simply changed his mind. All of this is to say that the style of reading that on *a priori* grounds ascribes systems of philosophy is one that tends towards de-contextualising individual utterances so as to re-contextualise them after some schema or other.

In short, it seems like a cumbersome and inconvenient tool for what *prima facie* like it may be done in a much simpler way. The business of intellectual history, as it will be pursued in this study, is the ascription of beliefs, their justifications and their consequents; one wants to know what someone thought, why they did that and what other beliefs follow from that. This in itself is no easy task, but I would claim that it doesn't get easier by denying oneself what we use to interpret the utterances of others throughout the rest of our lives, namely context. The hermeneutical approach adopted here is thus one that strives to recreate the context in which one may plausibly suppose that the utterances we choose to interpret would have been understood. If the systematic approach is one that de-contextualises so that as to loosen the criteria of relevance (i.e. one may allow statements years apart to be mutually relevant), ours is one that adopts fairly strict criteria for the relevance of other things written by Zhu, to the point where the ideal is that nothing apart from our texts is relevant unless explicitly asserted to be so. This ideal is not religiously followed by any stretch; there are several places where it would be silly to insist on the puritan rule, but as an ideal it seems valuable in keeping one honest²⁶.

We have said that it is the aim of this study to study the things Zhu says in these texts *as commentary*. One may legitimately ask what that means. Minimally it means that we think that the text Zhu is interpreting exerts *some* force over what Zhu may or may not say. Suppose the text seems to say that P and Zhu says that not-P, then, so far as Zhu is commenting, he will feel compelled to give reasons why it seemed to say that P. This is precisely what we find in the *Preface*; Zhu interprets the text as seeming to say that there are two minds, denies this and offers a reason why the text would speak as if there were two minds. Similarly, there are countless places where Zhu discusses Cheng Yi's reading of the 'mind transmission' where

²⁶ These reflections are an attempt at answering the call of Brandom 2002, p.98 when he says: 'Different choices for the context of *de dicto* ascriptions of conceptual content may have different virtues, provide different sorts of illumination. The beginning of responsible interpretation must be to make clear just how the boundaries of the context one is appealing to are determined – and so what the rules are for the sort of *de dicto* interpretation one is engaged in.'

he says that the reading couldn't possibly be right, because if it were the text would have said something else.

What I am *not* saying in claiming that we are dealing with commentary, rather than systematic philosophy is this: That it is merely passive passing on of what it says in some musty old tome. In fact, it is safe to say that Zhu is an active interpreter. What I am claiming is that this activity is at least a lively dialogue between Zhu and the text, but more likely a lively dialogue between Zhu, the text, previous interpreters of the text *and* Zhu's students.

1.5 Structure of the Thesis

With these reflections in mind, I will now describe how each of the chapters will contribute to our overall endeavour:

Chapter 2, *The History of a Distinction*, describes the textual history of the 'mind transmission' and its interpretations into the Song. Describing this history has several aims with different attendant criteria of relevance: The main aim is to see how the history of interpretation would have looked from Zhu's angle, so in selecting which commentaries we care whether they were known to Zhu or not. On the other hand, we want something like a historical baseline, so regardless of what Zhu believed, it is important to us that the 'mind transmission' is in all likelihood a late Han forgery, and a pastiche of elements from different pre-Qin texts. The upshot of this chapter is that we can see Zhu taking part of a discussion on the meaning of the text, drawing inspiration from certain interpreters (notably Su Shi) and criticising others (notably Cheng Yi). At the end of the chapter we provide a sketch of the influence of Zhu on this discussion as it went on through later dynasties.

Chapter 3, *The Ontology of the Two Minds*, describes how Zhu construes the nature of the mind in in these texts. It does this by observing that, in the ZZYL-record, Zhu employs three different arguments against those that would have one be rid of the 'mind of man' (*rénxīn*)' understood as arguments for his own reading, one suggesting that Zhu has a responsive model of the mind; and two suggesting the various ways in which these responses are determined. Another way of formulating what is here done, is that we are uncovering Zhu's own assumptions in interpreting the 'mind transmission'. The result of this is an increased understanding of the terminology Zhu employs in interpreting the 'mind transmission' and of how he construes the mind based first and foremost not on *a priori* assumptions, but on reconstructing a context in which they may be understood.

Chapter 4, *Awareness and the Two Minds*, describes the picture of moral action Zhu develops in these texts. It does this by first clarifying the term ‘awareness’ (*zhījué*) in light of the discussions of the preceding chapter and by engaging the work of two earlier scholars, the resulting concept of ‘awareness’ (*zhījué*) as a response expressing moral understanding is then read into a series of examples Zhu employs to elucidate different parts of the ‘mind transmission’ to see how Zhu develops a sort of ‘agency of responsivity’. That is to say that we here bring Zhu’s assumptions from the previous chapter into dialogue with the ‘mind transmission’. Throughout the latter half of the thesis, the notion of chance or contingency becomes increasingly prominent, so that chapter ends with a discussion of the role Zhu takes luck to play in moral action.

Remarks on Translation

Unless otherwise noted, all translations in this study are my own. Whenever a text is the object of discussion, it is given first in Chinese, then in translation. In translating, I have on the whole striven to be painfully literal, and with a thinker so ‘discursive’ as Zhu Xi, this has on the whole not caused any significant problems. What is a continuing problem is that of technical terminology, here several different approaches have been taken. Firstly, the gloss of any term taken to be technical is presented in scare-quotes throughout accompanied by *pinyin*. As the terms ‘awareness’ (*zhījué*), ‘physical constitution’ (*xíngqì*) and ‘normative constitution’ (*xìngmìng*) are the subjects of separate discussions throughout the study, I will not discuss them here. There is one term that, at different points, plays a key role in my argument which it doesn’t seem appropriate to discuss on a case-to-case basis. That term is ‘pattern’ (*lǐ* 理). The understanding of that term assumed in this thesis is one that owes a lot to the intrepid work of Zheng Zhemian. In his Ph.D. dissertation, he observes that Zhu first and foremost uses two glosses to describe the term: ‘that way in which’ (*suǒ yǐ rán* 所以然) and ‘the right way’ (*suǒ dāng rán* 所當然). He observes that, while terms such as ‘pattern’ (*lǐ*) and ‘Way’ (*dào*) are subject to a great variety of uses, ‘that by which’ (*suǒ yǐ rán*) and ‘how it must be’ (*suǒ dāng rán*) are fairly stable. He then surveys the use of these terms historically, and finds that the use of the former term has, in philosophical contexts, typically meant something like ‘how something was brought about’, that is, that it is a snugger fit with events and affairs than with objects.

In reading the use of these terms by Zhu, he suggests that these two phrases²⁷ refer to two different levels of understanding with regard to, first and foremost, moral action. Knowledge of the lower form, ‘how it must be’ (*suǒ dāng rán*) is to know, abstractly, that the right thing to do towards one’s parents is to be ‘filial’ (*xiào 孝*). Having a grasp of ‘that by which’ (*suǒ yǐ rán*) is to know how one actually goes about doing it²⁸. This reading seems to me to be more or less coherent with Steven Angle’s gloss for ‘pattern’ (*li*) as ‘the valuable, intelligible way in which things fit together’²⁹. What me adopting this understanding means, is that there are places where I will insist on reading the term as ‘the way to go about it’, and I think it makes much better sense that a thinker as interested in how we go about living should be interested in have explanations of that, rather than, say ‘sufficient reason’, as ‘pattern’ (*li*) has sometimes been understood as³⁰.

Another term we are here glossing in a peculiar manner is ‘*pneuma*’ (*qì 氣*) (Although I do not think it is unheard of). The intention was to adopt whatever Graham used, as I seemed to remember that it was Greek and roughly meaningless in modern English. As it happened I misremembered; Graham used ‘*ether*’ to gloss *qi*. But then I discovered that ‘*pneuma*’ was the term used to develop so-called *sympatheia*-theories of causation in Hellenic times, these seem sufficiently like the ‘stimulus-response’ (*gǎnyìng 感應*)- models that we will see appeal made to in this thesis for the misremembering to be a happy accident³¹.

The texts with lightly annotated translations are found in an appendix at the end of the work.

²⁷ Which have led different scholars to either think that Zhu confuses the is/ought-distinction or that him thus speaking shows us a way of deriving an ought from an is. For these topics, see Meng 2015.

²⁸ Cf. Zheng 2011. pp. 191-228

²⁹ Angle 2010, p. 32

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ For Graham on *qi*, see Graham 1967, pp. 32-42. For *sympatheia*-theories, see Emilsson 1988, pp. 47-62

2 The History of a Distinction: Background

The present thesis is an attempt to make sense of Zhu's interpretation of the 'mind transmission' as both an interpretation; and as an original piece of philosophy. The present has two goals:

1. To provide a background for the discussions in the following chapters.
2. To show that there is a definite increase in interpretive traction to be gained from getting at the philosophy by reading it as commentary.

The way in which we will do this is to first describe, so far as possible, the early textual history of the 'mind transmission' itself, and, having done this, to look at various earlier interpretations of these sixteen characters. In the selection of which earlier commentaries to discuss, the important criterion is of course whether it can be shown that Zhu had actually read them; reading earlier interpreters that he had read is of tremendous help in understanding the background as it would have looked to him.

In this group, we find the commentary ascribed to Kong Anguo 孔安國, Kong Yingda's 孔穎達 sub-commentary on that, Su Shi's 蘇軾 commentary and Cheng Yi's 程頤 famous remark on the 'mind transmission'. A regrettable absence from this set is Wang Anshi's 王安石 lost *New Meaning of the Shangshu* 尚書新義, which Zhu had some praise for. We will also briefly discuss an anthology of commentaries by students of the Cheng brothers made by a certain Huang Lun 黃倫 and the *Explanations of the Shu* by Zhu's friend, Lü Zuqian's 呂祖謙.

When this is done we will go into more detail in how Zhu's interpretation fits into this story; what is original in him, but also where it seems clear that lines of influence can be drawn. Before concluding, we will take a, necessarily incredibly partial look at the later history of interpretation to get a feel for the influence of Zhu's interpretation. We will be paying attention to several points: The content ascribed to the text; is it moral psychology or something else entirely? And in either case: How are the individual points in the 'mind transmission' interpreted as cohering with the over-all picture? Is it connected with any other texts? If so: which? How much of the text from the *Counsels of the Great Yu* is separated off as a unit to be commented on? This latter point is to say: Is the 'sixteen character mind transmission' a stable text? The answer to this last question, I will give in advance: Through

most of the history of interpretation we here will be sketching, the answer is yes, but in our Southern Song materials, this changes, and it is a source of some nuisance that I am unable to say why that is.

2.1 The Counsels of the Great Yu.

The ‘sixteen character mind transmission’ has a very curious history; it is part of the *Counsels of the Great Yu* chapter of the *Old Text Shangshu*, a text which purports to describe the events leading up to the Great Yu, whose feats include taming the rivers that kept on flooding north China, receiving the throne from the great sage-emperor Shun, in roughly 2070 BC. It is in the course of this, right at the high-point of the action, when Shun announces that the throne will be given to Yu, that Shun tells Yu to beware, for

人心惟危，道心惟微，惟精惟一，允執厥中³²

which we are tempted to render as

The mind of man is perilous; the mind of man is subtle; you must rarefy and unify them; sincerely hold fast to their Mean!

The following line of advise is far more prosaic:

無稽之言勿聽，弗詢之謀勿庸³³

Do not heed unconsidered counsel; do not follow plans without scrutiny

Which is to say: Within the *Counsels of the Great Yu* the ‘mind transmission’ stands out. In what follows, we will see some reasons for that.

The claim that any text from any version of the *Shangshu* is of greater antiquity than somewhere in the Spring and Autumn-period is one that should be controversial. For the *Counsels of the Great Yu*, as with most of the texts particular to the *Old text Shangshu*, it is entirely uncontroversial to say that it is an archaising Late Han forgery³⁴. The ‘mind

³² *Shangshu Zhushu*, juan 3, p. 12

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Shaugnessy 1993, p.377

transmission' itself appears to be an pastiche of a quote from the *Xunzi* and one from the *Analecets*. From the *Dispelling Blindness*-chapter of the *Xúnzi*³⁵ we find a reference to how

昔者舜之治天下也，不以事詔而萬物成。處一危之，其榮滿側；養一之微，榮矣而未知。故道經曰：「人心之危，道心之微。」危微之幾，惟明君子而後能知之。³⁶

In the past, when Shun put the world in order, he did not issue instructions about each task, yet the myriad things were brought to completion. He abided in unity, being anxiously on guard about them, and their flourishing filled every side. The subtlety of nurturing unity, [is such that] when it is brought to fruition, it is never recognized. Thus, the classic of the Way says: 'The anxiousness of the mind of man; the subtlety of the mind of the Way' Only the gentleman who has already become bright and clear is able to know the first hints of being anxiously on guard or of attentiveness to subtle manifestations³⁷

Of course, what we find in the *Counsels of the Great Yu* could be the genuine remnants of this lost text, the *Dào jīng*, John Knoblock is certainly open to this option. Knoblock also interestingly takes the 'two minds' as fully grown terms of art, something I am unsure of, but it matters little for our purposes. But as terms of art they have a very different sense than they later will have in Zhu's hands: while both Xunzi and Zhu see the 'mind of the Way' (*dào xīn*) as something that is sensitive to cultivation (although in very different ways), but in Xunzi's case, it is the result of artifice;³⁸ whereas Zhu thinks the 'mind of the Way' is tied to one's moral nature. Furthermore, as Zhu describes the 'mind of man' it is something to be on one's guard for, rather than something which is on its guard. Apart from that, we will also note a similarity in terminology; the text leading up to the quoted passage puts a significant weight on 'thoroughly understanding' (*jīng* 精), which together with the emphasis on 'unity' makes it easy to imagine how the 'mind transmission' seems to suggest a way in which that part of the pastiche came together. This is not to deny the possibility that a clear expression of something like the first three sentences of the 'mind transmission' existed in a text since lost, the aim is to make as much sense as possible of the materials we *do* have.

³⁵ It is a curious thing, one that we will not be able to follow up, that texts related to Xunzi keep popping up in connection with Zhu's interpretation of the 'mind transmission'; in the next two chapters we will see the *Record of Music* 樂記, a text which draws extensively on the *Xunzi*, play an important role. It should be said, though, that Zhu did not share the profound distaste for Xunzi of many other Neo-Confucians, which isn't to say that he had high thoughts on Xunzi's observations on 'nature' (*xìng*) 性.

³⁶ *Xunzi*, Chapter 21, section 10

³⁷ Translation significantly modified from Knoblock, vol. 3, pp. 106-107 I find Knoblock's translation peculiar, at the same time I cannot claim to make good sense of the text without him.

³⁸ Knoblock vol. 3, p.90-93

The phrase ‘sincerely hold to the Mean’ (*yǔn zhǐ jué zhōng* 允執厥中) and much of the content of the *Counsels of the Great Yu* appear to have their origin in *Analects* 20.1:

堯曰：「咨！爾舜！天之曆數在爾躬。允執其中。四海困窮，天祿永終。」舜亦以命禹。³⁹

[Yao] said: ‘Oh, you Shun! Heaven’s order of succession, upon your person comes to rest/ Unto the Mean do you hold fast!/ And within the Four Seas vast/ Heaven’s favour long will last⁴⁰. Shun also in this way commanded [Yu].⁴¹

Here the key phrase is said to be a part of an earlier mythical handover of power, namely that of Yao to Shun. This we will see Zhu making a point of in the *Preface*.

The key words that make up a large part of the ‘mind transmission’; ‘to focus/rarefy’ (*jīng* 精), ‘unify’ (*yī* 一), ‘to hold to/keep to’ (*zhí* 執) and ‘centre/Mean’ (*zhōng* 中) are all cultivation-vocabulary of the kind one finds in a great many Warring States, Qin and early Han texts, in many of these with a political undercurrent⁴². This has the curious effect that both the interpretations we will see that emphasise the political context described in the *Counsels of the Great Yu* in interpreting the ‘mind transmission’, and those that emphasise that the text has something to say about the mind both have some root in the text. Saying anything too definite about the content and purpose of a text with both date and authorship uncertain is unwise. The ‘mind transmission’ is a striking presence in the *Counsels of the Great Yu*, and its curious origins no doubt contribute to this. We will now see how this text was viewed by the two most influential commentators on the *Shangshu* before the Song.

2.2 Commentaries before the Zhu

Comentaries before the Song

A reason why the *Old Text Shang Shu* at various times has been treated as the genuine article, is the existence of a commentary attributed to Kong Anguo (traditional dates 156-100 BCE),

³⁹ Quoted from SSZJJZ p.194

⁴⁰ Or: ‘Should there be want or poverty within the four seas, Heaven’s emoluments will ever cease.’

⁴¹ Brooks and Brooks (trans.) 1998, p. 192 I have replaced Brooks and Brooks’ romanisation to *piyin*

⁴² For example, the *Inward Training* chapter of the *Guanzi* 管子 says that by ‘unfailingly maintaining unity, one may become master of the myriad things’ ‘執一無失，能君萬物’ see Roth 1999, p. 63

which is most likely a forgery by a Mei Ze 梅賾 from the fourth century CE⁴³. Nonetheless, given the canonical status this commentary achieved by being the one to which Kong Yingda attached his sub-commentary made by imperial command, it seems clear that it is the first we must consider.

We will first note that the ‘Anguo’-commentary has the ‘mind transmission’ as a unit to be commented on, circumscribed on both sides by commentary. What is remarkable about this commentary is how little in need of commentary it seems to think the original text to be; the commentary on the relevant passage merely reads

危則難安，微則難明，故戒以精一信執其中⁴⁴

If something is perilous it is difficult to make settled; if something is subtle, it is difficult to make clear, so [Shun] admonishes [Yu] to concentrate, unify and to sincerely hold to the mean.

This is a far cry from the high-powered philosophy we will see Zhu engaging in, and indeed from all later commentators. As an interpretation, the feature most prominent is the glossing of terms taken to be vague or difficult; the two predicates ‘perilous’ (*wēi*) and ‘subtle’ (*wēi*) being first and foremost vague, the archaizing use of the adverb ‘sincerely’ (*yǔn* 允) and the third-person pronoun (*jué*) 厥 being, one supposes, difficult. What for the Song commentators are the key words, ‘the mind of man’ (*rénxīn*) and ‘the mind of the Way’ (*dàoxīn*) are conspicuously uncommented. Yet one feature goes beyond being a mere gloss, and that is the assertion, by means of a ‘because of this’ (*gù* 故), of a rational relationship between the descriptions of the ‘two minds’ and the advice given, i.e. to concentrate, be of one mind and to hold to the mean. This rationalisation is entirely internal to the saying itself; that is, there is no attempt to tie these sixteen characters to the wider context of the *Counsels of the Great Yu* itself, or to any other context external to the text. These features will make this commentary stand out in comparison with the more substantive ones to follow.

Already the next commentary we will consider: the far more extensive Tang sub-commentary by Kong Yingda is in a different world entirely. It goes much further than the previous commentary, both in what it explains, how forcefully it explains, and in placing what is said within a greater context. In it, we see at least one feature that will be very evident in Zhu, and in other Song interpreters, namely the concern that the texts also cohere with *other*

⁴³ Cf. Shaughnessy p. 383

⁴⁴ *Shangshu Zhushu*, *juan* 3 p.12

canonical texts, although, as it is a sub-commentary on ‘Kong Anguo’s’, the division of the text remains the same:

易曰大君有命，是大君謂天子也，居位則治民，治民必須明道，故戒之以人心惟危道心惟微⁴⁵

The *Changes*⁴⁶ says that a great sovereign makes commands, this great sovereign is called the Son of Heaven, when he holds his place he governs the people, in governing the people he must have a clear understanding of the Way, so [Shun] admonishes [Yu] by saying that the human mind is restless, and that a mind set on the path is inscrutable.

This commentary first provides a rationale for the saying, and this rationale is not found in the text itself, but in another text entirely, namely the *Book of Changes*⁴⁷. The purpose of this commentary is to provide a rationale for what goes on in the text, even the *Changes*-quotation serves this purpose by explaining the relevance of talking about the mind in a handover of power. That is to say, the commentary situates the ‘mind transmission’ within the greater context of the *Counsels of the Great Yu* itself, but only to the general story described in the text, not to any of its details. While it is entirely possible that Kong Yingda treats the whole chapter as containing wisdom of importance, it seems reasonable to suppose that that wisdom will be of a political nature, certainly not metaphysical or moral. The interpretation of the ‘mind transmission’ itself, which we will now consider, confirms this impression.

In Kong Yingda’s interpretation, what one needs to know in order to understand the words themselves is the following:

道者徑也，物所從之路也。因言人心，遂云道心。人心為萬慮之主，道心為衆道之本。立君所以安人，人心危則難安，安民必須明道，道心微則難明；將欲明道必須精心，將欲安民必須一意，故以戒精心一意又當信執其中然後可。⁴⁸

A way is a path; it is the road things follow. As he’s already mentioned the human mind, he goes on to speak of the mind set on the path. The human mind is the ruler of all [the ten thousand] considerations; the mind set on the path is the root of all paths. A sovereign is established to pacify others; that the human mind is perilous means that it is difficult to pacify. To pacify the people one must have a clear understanding of the path [to be followed]. That a mind set on the path is inscrutable means that [the path]

⁴⁵ Ibid. p. 13

⁴⁶ The upper yin-line of hexagram seven, 師 ‘the host (of the army)’ has: ‘上六：大君有命，開國承家，小人勿用’ ‘He who the great sovereign orders is either to found a marquisate or establish a lesser feudatory, but if it is a petty man, he must not employ him.’, Lynn (trans.) 1994 p. 181

⁴⁷ This is not so strange a choice of authorising text; the sub-commentary is a part of *The Correct Meaning of the Five Classics* 五經正義, so using another of the *Five Classics* to rationalise what the text to be commented on says helps give the impression that the *Five Classics* ‘pull together’.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

is difficult to clearly understand. If one wants to clearly understand the path [to be followed], one must concentrate one's mind, if one wants to pacify the people one must make one's intention one [be single-minded]. That is why [Shun] admonishes [Yu] to concentrate his mind and make his intention one, and in addition tells him to sincerely hold to the mean, only then will it be acceptable [for Yu to assume the throne]

Unlike Zhu's interpretation, this is not advice given to anyone with a mind⁴⁹, so to speak; only a ruler of men is in a position to take this advice to heart and act on it. This is not so strange, given the context of the *Counsels of the Great Yu*, where a ruler of men is instituting the reign of another. We will also note that no line is here drawn between two minds; Kong Yingda treats the 'mind of the Way', or rather 'a mind set on the path', as a fortuitous metaphor authorised by the context. Kong Yingda, unlike 'Kong Anguo', is also more forthcoming in explaining what he takes to be the point of the cultivation-vocabulary, the point is to not be in two minds, but to be concentrated and single-minded in pursuit of one's goal (be of one intention, as the text says); the proper establishment of one's state.

It is difficult to describe a tendency in interpretation based on a mere two commentaries, high standing as a result of imperial sanction notwithstanding. What we can say is that the 'official position' was, perhaps not surprisingly, one that emphasised the political context of the *Counsels of the Great Yu*, and did not interpret it in the direction of a story about the mind, and the cultivation-vocabulary is treated in the most prosaic of terms. This stands in great contrast to what we will see to have been the tendency in the Song dynasty. That said, some of the techniques Kong Yingda uses will be seen to return in even stronger form; e.g. elaborating in a wider sense why someone would say something like the 'mind transmission' and bringing in other texts of good standing to explain the text of the 'mind transmission'.

Commentaries from the Northern Song

It is one of the great losses for our understanding of Song-history that Wang Anshi's *New Meaning of the Shangshu* 尚書新義 has been lost. In the present context its loss is especially

⁴⁹ Lee Ming-huei 2008, p.20, makes another point, namely that 'in the commentaries and sub-commentaries of the Han and Tang, 'the mind of man' and 'the mind of the Way' had not yet become a concept-pair with any special philosophical meaning.' As he doesn't even mention Xunzi, and there may be an argument that the terms aren't terms of art with him either, but this is unclear without a discussion.

egregious as he made it part of the curriculum during those wild years of the ‘New statutes’ 新法, and is thus arguably the most influential commentator of the Song dynasty, and because his commentary is mentioned with some approval by Zhu. Nonetheless, we do have another commentary mentioned approvingly by Zhu, one from a hand mostly remembered for being one of the finest poets in a history of fine poets, namely Su Shi. Su Shi’s interpretation is in an entirely different world than that of Kong Yingda and remarkably similar to that of Zhu, which is not to say that they are in complete agreement; several things Su says are things one can see Zhu vehemently disagreeing with, but on other points, the agreement is such that one almost suspects Zhu of having copied Su. The first words of Su’s commentary make both of these points clear:

人心衆人之心也，喜怒哀樂之類是也。道心本心也，能生喜怒哀樂者也。安危生於喜怒，治亂寄於哀樂。是心之發有動天地，傷陰陽之和者，亦可謂危矣。至於本心果安在哉？為有耶？為無耶？有則生喜怒哀樂者非本心矣；無則孰生喜怒哀樂者？⁵⁰

The mind of man is the mind [common to all] men. Things of the order of joy, anger, sorrow or rejoicing are all this. The mind of the Way is the original mind, it is what can birth joy, anger, sorrow and rejoicing. Peace or peril are born from joy and anger, being well-governed or in disarray are imparted by sorrow and rejoicing. Among what issues from the mind there are things that move Heaven and Earth and wound the balance of Yin and Yang, this can surely be called perilous! And as for the original mind, where can that be found? Does it exist, or doesn’t it? If it exists, what births joy, anger, sorrow and rejoicing is not the original mind. If it doesn’t exist, then what is it that gives rise to joy, anger, sorrow and rejoicing?

Su here does much of the same as Kong Yingda; he is providing a rationale for the way of expression chosen in the text, he even alludes to a text of good standing, the *Mean*, an allusion he later on makes explicit, but he does not look to the surrounding text for the justification; he tells a story of how the mind works. The relationship between that story and Zhu’s is fascinating, yet some differences in style are readily apparent. This is perhaps most clearly seen at the end of the quoted passage where Su indulges in some paradoxical fun. This slightly anarchic levity about issues of importance is not something one would find in Zhu. If I understand Su correctly, what he means to say is that *something* has to give rise to one’s emotions, and if not one’s original mind, then what? But any concrete pouring forth of emotion will be subject to all the contingencies of life and so in some way removed from one’s mind as it originally is. Regardless of whether this speculation holds water, what

⁵⁰ *Shuzhuan*, juan 3, p. 7

concerns us at the moment is merely that Su takes the ‘mind transmission’ to be about no mind in particular (Such as Yu’s, that of the ruler or the like), but about *any* mind, and elaborates the passage as such.

Su does have one sentence where he ties the ‘mind transmission’ to its context, but even this seems more like an excuse to make a general point about the mind:

舜戒禹曰：吾將使汝從人心乎？則人心危而不可據。使汝從道心乎？則道心微而不可見。夫心豈有二哉？不精故也，精則一矣。⁵¹

Shun admonishes Yu and says: Suppose I had you follow the mind of man, it would be perilous and unreliable. What if I had you follow the mind of the Way? It would be subtle and invisible. But surely there cannot be two minds? The reason is that one doesn’t concentrate, if one does this there will only be one.

This emphasis on the unity of the mind and some other locutions we also find In Zhu, nonetheless, there is a profound difference in how the mind is construed as hanging together; firstly Su does not make an appeal to anything more fundamental than the mind itself; the standard of correctness, the source of emotion, and so forth are all the mind so far as Su is concerned, whereas Zhu, as we will see, makes an appeal to at least two things more fundamental than the mind itself.

Interesting as Su’s thoughts on the mind are, we must remain superficial, and there are several more superficial points we must take note of: As he has already alluded to it through the list of emotions, Su not only quotes the *yīfā/wèifā* ‘manifest/unmanifest’-section of the *Mean*⁵² *in extenso*, and then proceeds to comment on it. For reasons of space, we cannot discuss that in any detail here, although it could be claimed that Zhu decided to upstage Su in grand style by appending and commenting the whole of the *Mean* to his comment on the ‘mind transmission’. As we will see, the sort of responses Zhu has in mind are of a slightly different sort than the emotion-list from the *Mean*, where Su and Zhu agree is in taking the cultivation-terms in the ‘mind transmission’ to suggest a process of cultivation in which one’s responses of the ‘mind of man’-type are made more like those of the ‘mind of the Way’-type, that is to say: A cultivated individual gets happy, angry, sad and enraptured just as much as the next person, but when he or she does this, it has moral significance. Su puts this in the following way, where he also correlates the emotions of the *Mean* with four things Su takes to be virtuous:

⁵¹ Ibid. p. 8

⁵² This passage was a hot topic among Southern Song Confucian thinkers, a close study of Zhu’s many changes of hear on this text is found in in Chen 2000, pp. 157-93.

苟見此心，則喜怒哀樂無非道者；是之謂和。喜則為仁，怒則為義，哀則為禮，樂則為樂[...]⁵³

If one sees this mind, then rejoicing, anger, sorrow and rapture will [all follow] the Way; this is called harmony. In rejoicing one is humane [*ren*], in anger one adheres to rightness [*yi*], in sorrow one enacts rites [*li*] and in rapture one creates music [*yue*].

The difficult work of finding ways of making the terminologies of ancient texts go together was one that many a Song-scholar engaged in, Su is rare in that on the one hand in exchanging the ‘wisdom’ (*zhi*) 智 many a reader of Mencius would expect at the end for ‘music’ (*yue*) 樂, and on the other for endorsing this pairing of emotions and virtues.

Another point of similarity is that Su also describes the ‘peril’ (*wēi* 危) involved as relating to the destabilising effects of desire:

‘若夫道心隱微而人心為主，喜怒哀樂各隨其欲，其禍可勝言哉’⁵⁴

‘If the mind of the Way is hidden and slight and the mind of man is in charge, then rejoicing, anger, sorrow and rapture will all follow one’s⁵⁵ desires, the calamities [brought about by this] are unspeakable!’

As we will see, Zhu will have quite a lot more than Su to say about desire, nonetheless, in seeing the ‘peril’ (*wēi*) of ‘the mind of man’ to lie in desire, and at the same time in connecting ‘the mind of man’ with some sort of basic receptivity or responsiveness to the world, they are very similar. A further similarity is the insistence of both that what is said in these lines is applicable to all, that none do not have ‘two minds’, in an appropriately qualified sense:

道心即人心也，人心即道心也；放之則二，精之則一。桀紂非無道心也；放之而已。堯舜非無人心也；精之而已。舜之所謂道心者，子思之所謂中也；舜之所謂人心者，子思之所謂和也。⁵⁶

The mind of the Way *is* the mind of man, the mind of man *is* the mind of the Way, if one abandons it [the mind] it is divided, if one concentrates it, it is unified. It isn’t that [the tyrants] Jie and Zhou lacked the mind of the Way, they merely abandoned it. And it isn’t that the [sage emperors] Yao and Shun lacked the mind of man, they merely concentrated it. What Shun calls the mind of the Way is what Zisi⁵⁷ the Mean; what Shun calls the mind of man is what Zisi calls harmony.

⁵³ *Shuzhuan*, *juan* 3, p. 8

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ Or ‘their’

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ Student of Confucius and purported author of *The Mean*

Because of some peculiarities of Zhu's interpretation, we will see him getting into some intellectual acrobatics attempting to say what Su here says, suffice it to say that Zhu also very much wants to say that the 'two minds' are in an important sense one, or more precisely that they can and should be. As for the rest, the main claim of this passage is one that Zhu happily endorses, in some places almost word for word, namely that even the lowest of the low have the ability to be good, and that even the highest of the high have had to overcome the sort of problems that we all face in doing good. This is profoundly different from all other users of the terms we have seen; Xunzi's thoughts are framed as advise for a would be consummate ethical person, the gentleman (*jūnzi*) 君子, Kong Yingda took the 'mind transmission' to be applicable only to a ruler of men, Su however makes these sixteen characters express what he treats as fundamental truths of the mental make-up of all human beings. This latter point is one that we will see Zhu go quite far with, so far as to separate the 'mind transmission' out from the rest of the text and to not regard the rest of the text as a relevant context of interpretation. The final claim of this passage, about the identity of terms used by 'Shun' and Zisi, is another that Zhu would not endorse, but which he nonetheless ends up saying something similar to; the terms from *The Mean* both describe perfected emotions, so the identity-claim is one suggesting a perfectibility that engages both 'aspects' of the mind, this we will see being one of Zhu's big claims as well.

Making confident claims about the relationship between Su's commentary and Zhu's various interpretations is complicated, as we will see, by several factors; chief among these being that, despite his praise for Su's commentary of the *Shangshu*, Zhu did not consider Su a 'predecessor' (This we will discuss in more detail below), so he neither directs the sort of careful sympathetic attention to him that he directs to, say, Zhou Dunyi, Zhang Zai or Cheng Yi, but neither does he direct the sort of careful critical attention to him that he gives to, say, Xie Liangzuo⁵⁸, which is to say that Zhu never says much very explicit about Su, the one way or the other. Another point that creates difficulty in describing the relationship between these two interpretations is the difference in terminology; if one wants to study the differences between, e.g., Cheng Yi and Zhu Xi, one can start from similarities in terminology and move on from there, that is, one can in many cases make sense of differences in purely *de dicto* terms, whereas between Su and Zhu, one also needs to make recourse to *de re* specifications

⁵⁸ An influential student of the Cheng brothers, see e.g. Yang 2014, pp. 315-323 and Yang 2010, pp. 277-283 for two good discussions on the bone Zhu had to pick with him

of their thoughts to make sense of their similarities and differences. Throughout my description of Su's commentary, I have attempted to indicate what such a comparison might look like, even though of course, space prevents us from going into all the details. When we get to Zhu's interpretations, we will see that many of the things he says certainly indicate that what he was doing was elaborating many of Su Shi's views in a different terminology, but that he also made some very different assumptions about how the mind hangs together that led him to discard or radically alter, if the assumption of influence is accurate, in figuring out his own.

The one interpretation of the 'mind transmission' that Zhu refers to explicitly, by its wording if not by its proponent is that of Cheng Yi. What I am here calling 'interpretation' is in reality a mere four rather gnomic *yǔlù* 語錄 records; nonetheless, two of these make an identification that Zhu isn't having any of:

人心惟危，人欲也；道心惟微，天理也。惟精惟一，所以至之；允執厥中，所以行之。⁵⁹

The mind of man is perilous, [this is about] human desires; the mind of man is subtle, [this is about] Heavenly pattern [*tiānlǐ*]. To rarefy and to unify them, that is how you reach it; to sincerely grasp that Mean; that is how you carry it out.

What Zhu objected to is the free and easy identification of 'the mind of man' and 'the mind of the Way' with two terms from the *Record of Music*; 'human desires' (*rényù*) 'Heavenly pattern' (*tiānlǐ*)⁶⁰ respectively, which he thinks entails a grievous mistake. For Zhu, the distinction meant something almost of the order of right and wrong. So in identifying the terms in this way, Zhu thought, Cheng was saying that 'the mind of man' was bad, he in several places says simply doesn't fit the text. The expression of this interpretation that Zhu *really* objected to, however, was the following:

人心私欲，故危殆；道心天理，故精微。滅私欲，則天理明矣。⁶¹

The mind of man is selfish desires and thus perilous; the mind of the Way is Heavenly pattern and thus essential and subtle. When one extinguishes selfish desires, Heavenly pattern becomes clear.

⁵⁹ *Ercheng Yishu*, juan 11, p.14

⁶⁰ This pair of terms has its origins in the *Record of Music* section 8 where it says that: '夫物之感人無窮，而人之好惡無節，則是物至而人化物也。人化物也者，滅天理而窮人欲者也。' 'The ways in which things can stir men are endless, and if no limitations are put on the likes and dislikes of men, then in meeting with things, man is transformed by them. When this happens, it is the extermination of Heavenly pattern and the exhaustion of human desires.'

⁶¹ *Ercheng Yishu*, juan 24, p. 2

The way in which Zhu read this, was as a exhortation to get rid of one's 'mind of man' and, as we shall see, this doesn't work very well on Zhu's reading of the text. These two are not the only formulations by Cheng Yi, however; he also puts his view the following way, which suggests a different picture:

人心惟危，道心惟微。心，道之所在；微，道之體也。心與道渾然一也。對放其良心者言之，則謂之道心；放其良心，則危矣。惟精惟一，所以行道也。⁶²
The mind of man is perilous; the mind of the Way is subtle. The mind, that is the place of the Way; subtle, its body⁶³. The mind and the way are completely intermixed so as to be one. When speaking to someone who has let their moral sense [*liangxin*] go, one calls it the mind of the Way; [for] to let one's moral sense [*liangxin*] go, would be perilous. Rarefy and unify, that is how one practises the Way⁶⁴.

Here an ideal state, where the mind and the Way are one is described, and then the very interesting claim is made that this saying applies to someone who has let his 'moral sense' or 'originally good mind' (*liángxīn*) go, using a term from the *Mencius*. Here the suggestion seems to be that, for one to speak of 'two minds', something has to be lost; and the work of 'rarefying and unifying' is an effort to bring oneself back into an original unity. Here and in the excerpts above there is no explicit reference to doings of the mind in the way that we saw in Su Shi, and which we will see again in Zhu.

I wrote above that it is interesting that the Cheng speaking should say that one talks about the 'two minds' to, or about, someone who has lost their 'moral sense' (*liángxīn*). The reason I find it worth noting is that while our Cheng is very evidently interpreting the 'mind transmission'; all the appropriate words show up in these records, but if one attempts to take this as an earnest attempt at interpreting the 'mind transmission' in its *Shangshu* context, one will have an exceedingly hard time making sense of the attempt; for either he is claiming that Shun, to whom Yao abdicated because of Shun's capability and virtue, had lost his 'moral sense' (*liángxīn*); or the 'two minded' in question would be the mass of the people, in which case the cultivation-vocabulary makes little sense. Furthermore, apart from the words of the 'mind transmission' itself, no reference whatsoever is made to the rest of *The Counsels of the Great Yu*, seemingly supporting the claim that in the hands of the Cheng brothers, the 'mind transmission' achieved a life of its own, more or less apart from its *Shangshu* context.

⁶² Ibid. *Juan* 21B, p. 5

⁶³ Or substance, *ti* 體,

⁶⁴ Lit. 'Walks the Way'

Nonetheless, given that Cheng Yi is inconsistent in how he interprets the passage, it seems something of a stretch to say, with Lee Ming-huei, that the words ‘mind of man’ and ‘mind of the Way’ had become fully grown pieces of technical vocabulary but they would become a topic of very lively discussion.

When it comes to regarding the ‘mind transmission’ as a part of the *Counsels of the Great Yu* or not, Zhu runs in both directions at once; on the one hand, there are several ZZYL-records and letters where only the words ‘mind of man’ and ‘mind of the Way’ show up, without even any of the cultivation-vocabulary, at the same time, in the *Preface to the Mean* which we will be looking at, a key point revolves around the story of the hand-over of power, and the ZZYL-record we will be focusing our attention on in the two chapters to follow holds it against the reading proposed by the Chengs that it fails to do justice to the text.

Commentaries in the Southern Song Before Zhu Xi

The influence of both of the Chengs on the intellectual life of the Southern Song was considerable and before we move on to considering Zhu, the most famous recipient of that influence, some words must be said of the greater movement Zhu was a part of, namely that large group of people often called the ‘*daoxue* fellowship’⁶⁵. For this we have a wonderful source in a collection of commentaries, called *The Essential Meaning of the Shangshu* 尚書精義, by a nearly unknown figure called Huang Lun 黃倫, who in his preface (Dated 1180) draws up a lineage of sorts, similar to the one we will see Zhu drawing up below, but which includes several thinkers excluded from Zhu’s. I will not go into great detail, as it is uncertain to what degree it was known to Zhu, at any rate it is not mentioned in the ZZYL. On the ‘mind transmission’ it has four different commentators: Zhang Jiucheng 張九成, a thinker roughly a generation older than Zhu; a certain Mr. Jia 賈氏; a Master Zhou 周子; and a Master Zhang 張子⁶⁶.

A first detail we will note is that unlike what Su Shi and the Chengs do, the text is not divided so as to make the ‘mind transmission’ a separate unit; it starts with the ‘mind transmission’, but ends much later. This is significant; for it suggests that the ‘mind

⁶⁵ For the term ‘*daoxue* fellowship’ and a description of the protagonists, see Tian (Tillman) 2011, for a discussion of the influence of Northern Song thinkers on the Southern, see Adler 2014, pp. 3-110.

⁶⁶ The latter two are possibly Zhou Fuxian 周孚先 and Zhang Ze 張澤, students of the Cheng brothers who also recorded some of their conversations. See *Ercheng Yishu*, *Tiyao* 提要.

transmission’ had not yet become widely regarded as a fixed unit, even within the group of people who looked up to the Chengs. This being so, even though the focus among the commentaries in Huang’s collection is on explaining what is meant by talk of ‘two minds’, they take into account more of the text in explaining them. So, for example, Zhang Jiucheng, thinker roughly a generation older than Zhu, spends the first part of his commentary explicating

敬修其可願，四海困窮，天祿永終。⁶⁷

Cultivate with reverence what may be wished of you, if within the four seas there is distress and poverty, your Heaven-sent emoluments will forever cease.

Which he connects with a sort of wide-reaching concern he takes to be involved in the term ‘mind of the Way’. Zhang like two of the other four does identify the ‘two minds’, ‘human desires’ (*rényù*) and ‘Heavenly pattern’ (*tiānlǐ*), but does not seem to commit to anything of the order Zhu ascribes to those who hold that view. In fact he seems less interested in the ‘two minds’ and more interested in how to achieve ‘the Mean’ (*zhōng*), and sees the ‘two minds’ as different ways of approaching that. If I read him correctly, ‘the Mean’ (*zhōng*) is some sort of political ideal and he reads the ‘mind transmission’ as applying *both* to a ruler and to the people to be ruled, each in their own way⁶⁸.

The aforementioned master Zhou takes a different tack; he identifies ‘mind of man’ with ‘the selfishness of desires for profit’ (*lìyù zhī sī*) 利欲之私 and calls the ‘mind of the Way’ ‘the mind of moral patterns’ (*yìlǐ zhī xīn*) 義理之心 (an epithet Zhu also sometimes uses), and, like one of the interpretations by Cheng Yi suggests that the aim is a unification of the mind and the Way. This unification will make one ‘numinous’ (*shén*) 神 and enable a universal responsiveness. He then says that what the cultivation terms of the ‘mind transmission’ refers to is maintaining this state of responsivity. The interpretation is not so much political or ethical as mystical⁶⁹.

A special mention must be made of a certain Mr. Jia 賈氏, who I have not been able to identify further. His commentary starts by specifying the meaning of the terms in a way very similar to those of the Chengs, but then he begins to discuss the context of the ‘transmission’ itself, i.e. he begins to describe what is going on between Yao and Shun. What he says is that

⁶⁷ *Shangshu Jingyi juan* 6, p. 3 The reader will remember seeing this phrase quoted from the *Analects* at the beginning of this chapter.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.* p. 4

⁶⁹ *Ibid.* p. 5

the ‘Mean’ of the ‘mind transmission’ is what is being transmitted, and that this was transmitted down through the ages; from the Xia dynasty all the way down to Confucius, and from him further on to Mencius, and then the transmission of the ‘Mean’ ended. He then ascribes this view of history to Han Yu 韓愈. Below, we will see Zhu telling a very similar tale of a transmission that was broken in antiquity, but his is far more optimistic; for he also tells a story of how this transmission was picked up again in the Northern Song⁷⁰.

Lastly, note must be made of Zhu’s friend, Lü Zuqian 呂祖謙, with whom Zhu made the anthology of writings by the Chengs, Zhang Zai and Zhou Dunyi known as *Reflections of Things at Hand* 近思錄, who also made a commentary of the *Shangshu*. Like Huang, Lü does not limit his commentary of the ‘mind transmission’ to the ‘mind transmission’ itself but again covers a few sentences more. His commentary is exceedingly long and fascinating; some of its more prominent features being as follows: While the way he unpacks the words ‘mind of man’ and ‘mind of the Way’ is similar to that of the Chengs, namely as ‘selfish mind’ (*sīxīn* 私心) and ‘good mind’ (*shànxīn* 善心), he does not in so doing commit himself to any of the heady metaphysics for which ‘*daoxue*’ Confucians are typically known. Furthermore, his explanation is like that of the others in taking the text to state a fact about how minds generally are, but he then ties this general fact directly to the context of the hand-over of power portrayed in the *Counsels of the Great Yu*, which is to say that he is commenting on the ‘mind transmission’ as an integral part of that text, as opposed to some almost free-standing clever remark⁷¹.

So far as we are here in a position to describe a general tendency, it would look something like this: Two prominent commentaries from the Northern Song both seem to have identified what would later be called the ‘sixteen character mind transmission’ as a more or less independent part of the text, and have taken this to state a general truth about the nature of the mind. One of these, Su Shi, even went so far as to identify what is said in those few lines with the psychology presented in *The Mean*. The choice to identify these sixteen characters as a unit is not an obvious one; even though doing so does have a respectable pedigree from pseudo-Kong Anguo and Kong Yingda, the ‘mind transmission’ as it appears in the text is not at all an independent unit, but part of a longer exchange where Shun offers several pieces of advice to Yu. During the Southern Song, the commentators we have looked

⁷⁰ Ibid. p. 4

⁷¹ Lü, *juan* 3, pp. 18-19

at continued to take something broadly corresponding to the ‘mind transmission’ to concern general features of the mind, and while they did pay token tribute to the phraseology of the Cheng’s, what strikes one about the Southern Song in our telling is the ‘wild West’-like variety of approaches to the text.

What I mean by ‘broadly corresponding’ is simply that none of the Southern Song texts we have looked at have divided the text so as to make the ‘mind transmission’ a separate unit. It is dangerous to generalise on the basis of such limited material, but given that both Huang Lun’s anthology and Lü Zuqian’s commentary represent the views of people in the sort of circles in which Zhu moved, the following claim seems fairly safe: That when Zhu went on to formulate his interpretation, he did so in a context where it was not a given that there was such a thing as a ‘mind transmission’, i.e. as something separate from the *Counsels of the Great Yu*, and that, apart from lip-service to Cheng Yi, no orthodoxy existed on the subject.

2.3 Zhu’ Commentaries

Throughout this chapter, I have phrased it as if Zhu had one interpretation of the ‘mind transmission’; this is, however, not the case. Zhu evidently thought it important enough to discuss several times. The two most important written works on it are without a doubt the *Preface to Commentary on the Mean* 中庸章句序 and *Explanation of the Counsels of the Great Yu* 大禹謨說, beyond these, the greater part on the section of the ZZYL dedicated to the *Counsels of the Great Yu* discusses the ‘mind transmission’ and so does much of the first of three *juan* in the ZZYL dedicated to *The Mean*, lastly there are countless letters where Zhu explains how he understands the text. As stated in the introduction, the main focus of this thesis is *Preface to Commentary on the Mean* and the correspondence with Zheng Kexue that documents some of the process and considerations that went into the formulations found in the *Preface*; and while we will attempt a wider view, it is this text which will be our focus.

The Succession of the Way

The *Preface* is a quite remarkable text that has rightly been discussed by several scholars⁷², I will here describe its most prevalent features. The task Zhu sets himself in the *Preface* is elaborating why the *Mean* was written, and in doing so he winds up spinning an intricate historical and textual yarn. The short answer, he seems to say, is that Zisi 子思, who he took to be Confucius' grandson and author of the *Mean*⁷³, was worried lest the learning of the true Way, that had been passed down from antiquity would be lost and so wrote it. For the longer answer, which the rest of the *Preface* is dedicated to fleshing out, Zhu enlists what we are calling the 'mind transmission' and places it within the context of a grand historical narrative he calls the 'succession of the Way' (*dàotǒng* 道統), the passage where it makes its appearance is worth quoting in full:

蓋自上古聖神繼天立極，而道統⁷⁴之傳有自來矣。其見於經，則「允執厥中」者，堯之所以授舜也；「人心惟危，道心惟微，惟精惟一，允執厥中」者，舜之所以授禹也。堯之一言，至矣，盡矣！而舜復益之以三言者，則所以明夫堯之一言，必如是而後可庶幾也。⁷⁵

For ever since the sagely and spiritual men of high antiquity took up the work of Heaven and established the bounds, the transmission of the succession of the Way came of itself. In the classics, it is seen in 'sincerely hold to that Mean!', which was what Yao passed on to Shun; and 'The mind of man is perilous, the mind of the Way is subtle, you must rarefy and unify them, and sincerely hold to that Mean!', this was what Shun passed on to Yu. How Yao's one saying hits the mark and is exhaustive! Shun's adding another three sayings is his way of clarifying Yao's one saying, it must be like this and only then can one begin to approximate it.

Zhu's formulation here is what has given these sixteen characters the name 'mind transmission'; the implication being that the saying of these four phrases at the right time should have an almost mystical effect on the listener and that what is 'transmitted' in a certain sense *is* a mind in the ideal state. Of further interest is that while Zhu does allow the context of *The Counsels of the Great Yu* to have some influence; the protagonists are very clearly the

⁷² An influential study with an eye towards the text's reception during the Yuan dynasty is de Bary 1981, pp. 1-66, Adler 2014, pp. 16-76 also contains several interesting reflections.

⁷³ For a good description of the complex textual history of the *Mean* and the various theories of authorship, ancient and modern, see Johnson and Wang 2012, pp. 181-209, for our purposes it more than suffices to describe what Zhu thought was the case.

⁷⁴ The term 'succession of the Way' 道統 is doubtless the most discussed term in the entire preface. The term was until recently regarded as coined by Zhu, but in a recently discovered inscription by Qin Gui 秦檜, minister under Gaozong (r.1127-1163) the term is used to denote Gaozong's receiving both the teacherly and kingly transmissions of the Way lost since Mencius. Li and Hartman 2010 discuss the inscription and interpret it as entailing that Zhu in the *Preface* was making the most vociferous expression of a mounting (rhetorical) challenge to imperial authority. Indeed, the *Preface* at several points seems to be answering the inscription.

⁷⁵ *SSZJJZ*, p. 14

same, but no other words or phrases from that text are included or taken as relevant to its interpretation. Furthermore, as the *Preface* goes on, their exchange is placed within a grand narrative of such transmissions, as we saw before, going down through the kings of the various dynasties, until, curiously, Confucius receives the transmission, despite not having achieved that position, it was then properly understood by a mere two of Confucius' students, Zengzi 曾子 and Yan Hui 顏回 (Who tragically died young). These then passed it on to Zisi, who composed the *Mean* and in addition transmitted the mind/Way to Mencius, after whom the transmission ceased for over a thousand years. At which point the transmission was picked up again so that the succession may continue by the Cheng brothers. This is obviously a very different kind of context in which to interpret those sixteen characters than the one offered by *The Counsels of the Great Yu*; the interpretation Zhu offers of the 'mind transmission' itself we will look into below, first we must provide some more insight into the significance of Zhu's talk of 'transmission'.

As mentioned above, the Zhu's notion of 'succession of the Way' (*dàotóng*) is by far the most discussed aspect of the *Preface*, so it behoves us to make sense of what it is doing here. This task is however more difficult than it would appear, for while the motivations for presenting a lineage such as the one he does can be made clear without too much work (we will do so presently), the connection of that lineage to Zhu's interpretation of the terms 'mind of man' and 'mind of the Way' are not equally obvious. Let us first consider the purpose of constructing such a lineage. We have already heard mention of three such lineages, namely that of Han Yu, that of Huang Lun's preface to his anthology and that of 'Mr. Jia' within the anthology itself. So within circles known to Zhu this was something of an established form, and it was not unheard of to connect such lineages to what we are now calling the 'mind transmission'. These seem to have been part an ideological bragging contest among the 'dàoxué fellowship', where part of the point was to assert the legitimacy of one's own teacher and implicitly oneself. The *topos* of 'the Way lost since Mencius' is common to all of these. These stories involve an interesting move (One which has its predecessors going at least as far back as the Han) where one by a sleight of hand places Confucius on equal footing with a long succession of kings. Zhu makes this move explicit, and says that

[...]吾夫子，則雖不得其位，而所以繼往聖、開來學，其功反有賢於堯舜者
[...]⁷⁶

⁷⁶ Ibid. p. 15

[...] our great master [Confucius], even though he did not achieve his position, but in the way in which he continued [the work] of the former sages, in opening up the learning for the future, there are aspects of his accomplishments that even exceed those of a Yao or a Shun

Here Confucius' act of serving as a teacher and making his teachings available makes him in some aspects even greater than the sages of old. Although it should be said that sageolatry at the time was about as controversial as bardolatry is in present day England, so this move in itself is fairly harmless. Less so is the claim he makes about what happened after 1300 years of oblivion⁷⁷. For as already mentioned he says that the Way was revived in the Northern Song by the brothers Cheng, and if the hypotheses of Li and Harman mentioned above are correct, then placing these within a 'succession of the Way' (*dàotǒng*) using the term is in itself an affront to imperial authority⁷⁸, placing scholars, and *dàoxué*-scholars at that, above the emperor when it comes to the important work of transmitting the Way. On the assumptions here being made, this is very evidently an attempt at justifying a greater influence for Zhu and those liked by him at court. What alleviates some of the polemical force of this somewhat is that, as mentioned, the drawing up of lineages of this kind was a fairly established form at the time, Zhu merely stands out in having used the term 'succession of the Way' (*dāotǒng*). If the force of that bit of polemicizing is somewhat dampened, his other move in that direction is considerably blunter. This is directed in a somewhat safer direction, namely at other claimed followers of the Cheng brothers, after saying that *The Mean* was what allowed the Chengs to revive the Way, and that this is Zisi's great accomplishment, he says:

微程夫子，則亦莫能因其語而得其心也。惜乎！其所以為說者不傳，而凡石氏之所輯錄，僅出於其門人之所記，是以大義雖明，而微言未析。至其門人所自為說，則雖頗詳盡而多所發明，然倍其師說而淫於老佛者，亦有之矣。⁷⁹

[...] were it not for the masters Cheng, none would understand [Zisi's] mind on the basis of its [*The Mean*'s] sayings. It's an absolute shame! Their explanations [of *The Mean*] have not been passed on, and all that Shi [Zichong] has edited and recorded

⁷⁷ Although it should here be noted that not everyone agreed with this assessment of the intervening millennium, for example, Chen Liang's 陳亮 quarrel with Zhu seems, *inter alia*, to have been about the degree to which especially the Tang and Han had really been Dark Ages (A very tall claim indeed!). For the details of the quarrel two good accounts are found in Tillman 2011, pp. 152-199, Lao 2015 Vol. 3, pp. 258-267 and Wilson 1995, pp. 89-90 places the quarrel within a greater context of ideological uses of history among Neo-Confucians.

⁷⁸ The inscription Li and Harman have found was apparently originally part of a prestige project where a university was opened in 1142 with several inscriptions made both by the emperor and by Qin Gui with the project finished in 1155, it was destroyed by a certain Wu Ne 吳訥 during the Ming for being offensive to his *daoxue*-sensibilities (Li and Hartman 2010, pp. 391-393)

⁷⁹ Ibid.

come from what their students have written down, because of this, the general sense [of *The Mean*] is clear; but the subtle sayings [in *The Mean*] are still not understood. And as for the explanations of their students, even though there is much that is careful and penetrating and many clear elaboration, but along the sayings of their teachers there are also some Buddhist and Daoist defilements.

So a work of this importance is not being properly understood, and those who should be helping us understand it, i.e. the Cheng brothers' students, are not pulling their weight. In the last paragraph of the *Preface*, Zhu makes it clear who might be able to clear up this problems. Not surprisingly, perhaps, it is himself; having studied the text since a young age, and having contemplated its difficult parts for many years, and having gone through all explanations he has come across, Zhu is uniquely placed to continue the succession (Although in fairness he does not say it quite so directly, but that is certainly how it was understood).

The Mind Transmission

Now that we have a rough grasp of what the notion of 'succession of the Way' (*daotong*) consists in, we must return to our ostensible topic; namely the interpretation of the 'mind transmission' itself. We were unclear above as to the status of the 'mind transmission' within this greater narrative that Zhu is weaving here, and Zhu has not done much to help us, he has rather made things more complicated by his emphasis on *The Mean*'s being the text we need to set ourselves straight. What I think is his meaning is something like this: True, what the sages of old transmitted to each other consisted, from Shun onwards, of the 'sixteen character mind transmission' (they also handed on the empire, after all), but as Zhu says at the end of his preamble, those four sayings are only the bare minimum, and most of us are not sages to begin with; we need something more. That 'something more' would be *The Mean* and ideally also its explanation by the Chengs. Nonetheless, after the preamble which ended with him saying that the four sayings of Shun are only barely sufficient to explain Yao's one saying, Zhu goes on to present his own. In his explanation, Zhu does something quite astonishing and unlike all interpretations we have seen earlier in this chapter; he denies the literal truth of what the 'mind transmission' says, interpreting it instead as a shorthand for a much more complex situation. What he says is the following; first, he denies that there are two minds, as one may be led to believe from the text, by asserting that

心之虛靈知覺，一而已矣 [...] ⁸⁰

The mind, whether empty and alert or aware [in stillness and in outer-centred activity], is simply one [...]

Here the first two terms used to characterise the mind denote an ideal state Zhu thinks the mind has when it is not engaged in any activity; the second two will be the subject of the following two chapters, but in short the term ‘awareness’ (*zhījué*) denotes mental events that occur when the mind in one way or another engages with the world. So, where we thought we were speaking of the mind, or perhaps of two minds, Zhu says that there is merely one and adds another ‘level’ in addition to the mind; that is, at this point, we have the mind and its activities. But Zhu is not in the business of calling the sages liars, so he must find some way of making this talk of ‘two minds’ justified, this he does in the following way:

而以為有人心、道心之異者，則以其或生於形氣之私，或原於性命之正，而所以為知覺者不同。 ⁸¹

and the reason for having the distinction between the mind of man and the mind of the Way, is that some [awareness] is born from the self-centredness of one’s physical constitution [*xingqi*] and some [awareness] originates in the correctness of one’s normative constitution [*xingming*], and the way in which they are awareness [*zhijue*] is not the same.

So it makes good sense to speak as if there were two minds, for this talk mirrors a genuine duality (if not dualism) which is at a deeper ‘ontological level’, so to speak. If we use the metaphor of levels for another moment, we can say that at the deepest level of the ‘mental makeup’ of a person there are two things which may originate responsive mental events; one self-centred and one morality-centred. The responsive mental events are at the ‘top level’, as it were; they branch out into a world outside the person. In the middle one has the mind which is the ‘interface’. So where other interpreters during the Song gave us stories which were rather unclear about what was really going on with ‘the two minds’, Zhu has already piled upon us a neat scaffolding of concepts and he hasn’t even made it to the end of the first two phrases of the ‘mind transmission’.

He makes quick work of the characterisation of ‘the two minds’ as ‘perilous’ and ‘subtle’ respectively, however, saying that it follows from the ‘awareness-es’ coming from these two origins that the one would be ‘perilous and difficult to settle’ and the other ‘subtle and difficult to see’. He further makes it clear that these ‘two origins’ are a part of the makeup

⁸⁰ Ibid. p. 14

⁸¹ Ibid.

of *everyone*; that is, everyone has a ‘mind of man’, even sages; and everyone has a ‘mind of the Way’, even the thoroughly stupid.

In the *Preface*, Zhu explains the cultivation-terms in two ways, first he says:

精則察夫二者之間而不雜也，一則守其本心之正而不離也。⁸²

To rarefy them is to carefully distinguish between the two, avoiding any intermingling; to unify them is to hold to the straightness of the original mind without departing.

The reader will be forgiven for finding this a bit vague. The other way is more suggestive:

[...]必使道心常為一身之主，而人心每聽命焉。⁸³

[...] and one must make the mind of the Way constantly be the ruler of one’s whole person, and have the mind of man ever obey its command

That is to say: The point is not to get rid of ‘the mind of man’, for as we saw above that isn’t possible; what matters is to ‘subjugate’ it, as it were. What he means by this is a complex matter, one we will return to in both the following chapters.

Right now I would like to take a step back and address some points that we have left vague that are integral to the history we are here relating; a first point is the (1) relationship between the talk of a ‘succession of the Way’ (*dàotǒng*) and the interpretation of the ‘mind transmission’ itself, a second point is (2) the relationship between Zhu’s interpretation and earlier interpreters, in particular to Su Shi, to whom I noted that Zhu had many similarities.

The first point first: A reader may have felt that, when my exposition moved from the elaborate historical narrative Zhu uses to frame the ‘mind transmission’ to the interpretation of the ‘mind transmission’ itself it was as if moving to an entirely different universe of discourse; the two strains of discourse seems as if they could live quite independently of each other. This intuition is to some extent mirrored in Zhu’s treatment of the text, as it turns out; the ‘mind transmission’ is interpreted and terms from it are employed throughout the ZZYL, but never in the vicinity of the term ‘succession of the Way’ (*dàotǒng*), nor for that matter in the vicinity of narratives similar to that presented above. In fact, the term ‘succession of the Way’ (*dàotǒng*) only makes two appearances in the whole of the ZZYL⁸⁴. All the same, it will

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Given the highly sensitive content we have ascribed to it, which would lead students to ask about Zhu’s thoughts in this regard, and the later wide acceptance of Zhu’s narrative, which would mean that a later editor

not do to say that there is no connection between the ‘mind transmission’ and the ‘succession of the Way’ (*dàotǒng*)-narrative, for Zhu very obviously hijacks the context of the *Counsels of the Great Yu* to create his ‘succession’-narrative, and the ‘mind transmission’ comes as part and parcel of that. Thomas A. Wilson suggests that the moral psychological story is meant to figure as a legitimating ploy that both explains why there have been in excess of 1300 years of darkness since the death of Mencius (people, and especially rulers, have only followed their ‘minds of man’) and why it is still possible, after such a long period of darkness to revive the succession (because everyone has a ‘mind of the Way’, one that, in favourable circumstances can enable one to realise the Way in the world in which one lives)⁸⁵.

Wilson’s suggestion is interesting and broadly coheres with the reading I will be elaborating in the pages to come. Nonetheless, the language used in the ‘succession’-narrative is that of a (polemical) speculative historian, while that in the interpretation of the ‘mind transmission’ is more that of a speculative psychologist or moral philosopher, and that the emergence of the latter within the former in the *Preface* seems almost intrusive. So the relation between these two lines of thought is complex, but given the last point it seems inherently possible to only research the psychological story Zhu weaves around the ‘mind transmission’ without giving the same attention to the ‘succession’-narrative and for two reasons: 1. While the text of the ‘mind transmission’ is integral to the ‘succession’-narrative, the converse is not true; in fact ‘transmittability’ or the like is not one of the features Zhu ascribes to either of the ‘minds’. 2. Zhu in fact does the same; the broad tendency is to see the ‘mind transmission’ discussed without any ‘succession’-narrative anywhere to be seen.

What then about the second point that we raised above? That is, about the relationship of Zhu’s interpretation and those of previous interpreters. There are several salient points that stand out: It is worth noticing that Cheng Yi, who in interpreting Mencius developed a very complex and ‘multileveled’ view of the mind (One that would have considerable influence on Zhu), doesn’t employ any of these trappings in interpreting the ‘mind transmission’, and that the same holds for all later *dàoxué* commentators we have seen as well. On the other hand, Zhu does allow for a connection with the terms ‘human desires’ (*rényù*) and ‘Heavenly pattern’ (*tiānlǐ*), yet at an order removed; for him, the absence of goodness that characterises

would not feel compelled to erase mentions of it, I feel that this offers further support of the conjecture made in the introduction, supported by Qian Mu, that the Preface we have is not to be dated to 1189, but much later.

⁸⁵ Wilson 1995, p.90

‘human desires’ (*rényù*) only is a result of only ‘following one’s mind of man’, and is in no way identical to it.

As we have seen, Zhu also follows some of the later *dàoxué* commentators in inserting a lineage of sages into his explanation of the ‘mind transmission’, and even though, as we have seen, Zhu does not integrate his moral psychology so well in his ‘succession’-narrative, he does go some way in explaining what the text of the ‘mind transmission’ is doing there; it is literally what was transmitted (along with, in the case of those transmissions where rulers are involved, the right to rule the world).

A more eccentric aspect of Zhu’s interpretation is of course that he in many ways seems to be offering an elaboration of Su Shi’s interpretation. While their terminologies are very different indeed, there is much which is plainly common: Both insist that what is at issue is not two minds, but two aspects of the mind, and that the ‘unification’ spoken of in the ‘mind transmission’ is a matter of bringing the ‘mind of man’ in line with ‘the mind of the Way’. Another common point is elaborating the content of the terms ‘mind of man’ and ‘mind of the Way’ as mental events, Su uses the emotion-terms from *The Mean*, while Zhu uses ‘awareness’ (*zhījué*) (But as we will see, these are not unrelated). A last point of similarity is one that it is easy to miss if one merely pays attention to terminology, but Su also assumes that there has to be some form of underlying basis for the emotions, he merely doesn’t another term to denote that basis, but fills that ‘role’ with ‘the mind of the Way’.

2.4 After Zhu

How were the things we have been discussing received in later dynasties? On this point, we can only offer the most cursory of description and have to rely more on secondary scholarship than in the previous sections. My aim here is not to consider details of interpretation so much as it is to see whether Zhu had an impact on the overall shape of the later discussion.

Thankfully, Xie Xiaodong 謝曉東 has written an interesting article detailing the relationship between Zhu’s interpretation of the ‘mind transmission’ and the great Ming Confucians Wang Yangming 王陽明 and Liu Zongzhou 劉宗周. These thinkers defined themselves in contradistinction with Zhu. Of course, in so doing they exposed themselves to being defined by what they were against and, in several regards we are interested in, this is what happened. Xie quotes Wang in making the following claim, which it is difficult not to read as a stab against Zhu:

聖人之學，心學也。堯、舜、禹之相授受曰：『人心惟危，道心惟微，惟精惟一，允執厥中』此心學之源。⁸⁶

The learning of the sages is the learning of the mind. What Yao, Shun and Yu handed on between them was this: ‘The mind of man is perilous; the mind of the Way is subtle, one must rarefy and unify them, and sincerely hold fast to the Mean’ this is the origin of the learning of the mind.

Evidently, Wang also wanted to take part in the ideological struggles of the Southern Song⁸⁷, or more precisely he wanted to outdo Zhu at his own game. But this of course meant also accepting the basic narrative Zhu had placed the text within *and* the limits of the text of the ‘mind transmission’. This is of course not to say that Wang didn’t deliver an original interpretation of the text; in fact, as Xie presents it, Wang seems to have done something very similar to Zhu. That is to say that he in large part borrowed freely from earlier interpreters *and* expanded this in the direction of his own interests. These borrowings were, interestingly, in large part from Cheng Yi and Zhu. He quotes, approvingly, both of the different styles of interpretation we quoted from Cheng Yi, but in the concrete contents of ‘the two minds’ mentions many of the same ‘movements of the mind’ as we will see Zhu describing⁸⁸. Xie tells a similar story about Liu Zongzhou; the philosophy is new, but the textual parameters within it is developed are set by Zhu. Indeed, this seems to have been the norm for philosophically inclined interpreters, as the same can be seen in Wang Fuzhi 王夫之, that great enemy of both Zhu and Wang⁸⁹.

The only real challenge to this paradigm of interpretation came from the ‘Evidential research’ (*kǎozhèngxué*) 考證學 scholars of the Ming and Qing; these scholars, with Mei Zhuo (梅鷟) (fl. 1513) acting as a pioneer, read the ‘mind transmission’ as a text whose claims needed to be separately verifiable in order for them to have any guiding function. In this regard the text was found to be a failure; Mei Zhuo has as one of his claims to fame telling a story of the writing of the ‘mind transmission’ that closely parallels that endeavoured at the beginning of this chapter, the difference being that he nominated another forger⁹⁰.

⁸⁶ Quoted from Xie 2008, pp. 10-108

⁸⁷ This is not unique to Wang; certain modern scholars also engage in this sort of thing. See e.g. Berthrong 2015 who argues that a modern ‘succession of the Way’ should also include Xunzi.

⁸⁸ Xie 2008, p.108

⁸⁹ Cf. Chen 2013, pp. 78-80

⁹⁰ Cf. Elman pp. 193-198

2.5 Concluding Remarks

In this chapter, we have seen how sixteen characters of a text most likely forged in the later Han or Wei came to be interpreted, first as a political tract, and later as a work of moral psychology. We have seen that these moral psychologies came in several varieties and we have seen some political and inter-scholarly controversy be framed in terms of these mere sixteen characters. When it came to his predecessors, Zhu's attitude seems to have been one of creative engagement. Which is to say that one can very clearly see several points in Zhu's explanation where the historical lines are fairly easy to trace, without its being reducible to his 'sources'. In fact, it is tempting to see Zhu as we meet him in our texts, and especially the *Preface*, as taking part in dialectic process, both with the text and with other interpreters. The moral psychology he develops in discussing this text is far more regimented than those of the other interpreters; nonetheless, it includes many features that seem to be either borrowings or responses to earlier interpreters. Both in the frame he provided for the text and in the thoughts he formulated by means of the text, he set the parameters for several hundred years of philosophising around this text to such a degree that even thinkers who defined themselves in opposition to him formulated their thoughts within these parameters. We also observed a curious phenomenon for which we have no immediate explanation: Throughout this history of interpretation, the 'mind transmission' was a relatively stable unit for commentators to comment on; but during the Southern Song, this changed, and precisely in commentaries within the 'daoxue-diom'; namely those of Huang Lun and Lü Zuqian. In the two chapters to follow we will be exploring the thoughts formulated by Zhu and his way of formulating them; In the following chapter we will investigate the 'multilevel' psychology we saw him to have formulated in interpreting this text, or to put the same point another way: We will be looking at the terminology Zhu used to interpret the text. And in chapter 4 the picture of moral action that he formulates under the rubric of 'awareness' (*zhījué*) in concert with the 'mind transmission' will be dealt with. Of course, whether a more complex moral psychology means a better interpretation of simply more over-interpretation is another matter, which we will to some extent pick up in the last, concluding chapter.

3 The Ontology of the Two Minds

In the last chapter, we saw how Zhu set himself apart in several respects from the authors we surveyed; against those who would say that ‘the mind of man is bad, the mind of the Way is good’, he offered an interpretation of the ‘mind transmission’ where talk of ‘two minds’ was analysed as ‘really being’ talk of different kinds of ‘awareness’ (*zhījué*) that was ‘born from’ or ‘originated from’ different ‘origins’, and one assumes that these give rise to different kinds of ‘awareness’ (*zhījué*). These ‘origins’ we glossed as ‘physical constitution’ (*xíngqì*) and ‘normative constitution’ (*xìngmìng*) respectively

In this chapter, we begin in earnest with understanding what I in the introduction called Zhu’s responsive, as opposed to representational, model of the mind as presented in his commentaries and discussions of the ‘mind transmission’. That is, it is the terminology Zhu uses in interpreting the text, and the commitments we can infer on the basis of that, that is our topic.

At the moment, our claim for a responsive model of the mind still remains a hypothesis, one that must be confirmable by our texts for it to do any work. This is the first task of this chapter. When this is done, we will be able to say that the term ‘awareness’ (*zhījué*) is a response of some kind to something external. To further be able to understand this load-bearing word, we will then ask what the nature of these origins Zhu speaks of is. In answering this question we will propose that Zhu, taking the mind to be first and foremost a responsive thing, would not be as interested as the early modern European philosophers in what it is that influences the accuracy of representations, but *would* be very interested in describing what it is that influences the ways in which one responds to situations, and in particular what it is that enables and hinders the right kind of responses.

The way in which we will be working this out, is by letting the things Zhu says in our ZZYL-record do a lot of heavy lifting; in it, Zhu argues for his reading, which he takes to stand apart from the norm in not encouraging one to get rid of ‘the mind of man’, he does this by relying on very specific references to other texts. These texts are all ones Zhu had written commentaries on, and indeed his references to them belie a very specific understanding of them. What we will be doing is following up three of these arguments: A first argument that throws light on the understanding involved in these texts of what a mind is; the second that elucidates the nature of the ‘physical constitution’ (*xíngqì*); and a third that aids in our understanding of the ‘normative constitution’ (*xìngmìng*).

This approach is motivated by several factors; all the terms involved here, especially in the two ‘constitutions’ are terms that find a tremendous great variety of uses in Zhu’s work⁹¹ and it is not given *a priori* which of those uses are relevant in interpreting what Zhu is saying here. The assumption is that if Zhu makes a very specific understanding of another text load-bearing in making an argument, then that is an assertion of relevance to the present case. This has the virtue of basing our ascriptions of beliefs on what is given as reasons for those beliefs. There is also the further point that this sort of creative use of quotation was a widespread approach to rhetoric throughout the premodern period and very much so during the Song⁹².

Before we begin our discussion in earnest, it may be of value to remind ourselves what Zhu is engaged in doing in these texts; to be sure, he is interpreting a text, and he at several points appeals to the wording of the text of the ‘mind transmission’ in order to make his case; furthermore, in both the ZZYL-record and the letters to Zheng Kexue, he is engaging Zheng and his interpretive problems, he is engaging the views of several contemporaries or near contemporaries; at the same time, Zhu seems very intent on making clear a view which is very much his own. This view has two aspects, reflected in the division of labour between the present chapter and the following. Judging from the amount of text divided to each of these aspects it seems safe to say that what is closest to Zhu’s heart is saying something about the nature of moral action (The subject of the following chapter) and indicating how one can cultivate the ability to act morally. Related to this last point is the second aspect which we are discussing in the present chapter; namely the structure of the mind. Yet this talk of the structure of the mind is not entered into out of pure curiosity; it is there to give an explanation of how it can be that moral action works in the way that it does, and to make clear what kind of cultivation is to be done and what it is that one can cultivate.

3.1 Taking Responsiveness as Basic

As we have already noted, depending on the text commented on, Zhu has several ways of speaking of the mind. A common feature of two of these, which we later in this chapter will

⁹¹ Zhu’s interest in the term *xìngmìng* for example is related to it showing up in the judgement commentary on hexagram 1 *Qian* (☰) in the *Yijing* that was used by Zhou Dunyi, Zhang Zai and Cheng Yi to say a great variety of things, all of which Zhu at various times had something to say about, not to mention the great variety of uses of each of the individual terms.

⁹² As Li and Hartman 2010 esp. pp. 397-409 show in their reading of Qin Gui’s inscription.

be show to be of relevance to us interpreting his ‘mind transmission’-interpretations, namely the stories Zhu tells about the *Mencius* and *The Mean* is what we, for lack of a better word, may call the ‘language of origination’. What I mean by this is that the use of locutions such as ‘emerge from’ (*chū yú* 出於), ‘be rooted in’ (*běn yú* 本於), ‘originate from’ (*yuán yú* 原於), ‘be born from’ (*shēng yú* 生於) and ‘issue from’ (*fā yú* 發於) are used by all these texts to describe the relationship between some ‘origin’ and various events in the mind. What we will here show, is that these terms denote first and foremost responses to fairly specific situations. What I mean by this, is that when ‘awareness’ (*zhījué*) ‘originates in’ one of the two ‘constitutions’, it is not a process or a state we are faced with, but a singular event; it is something that happens under particular circumstances at a particular time in response to something in particular.

As we saw some inklings of in the last chapter and will see clearly in the next, Zhu did not agree with identifying ‘the two minds’ with Heavenly pattern (*tiānlǐ*) and human desires (*rényù*) respectively, at the same time he was very keen on drawing a distinction between human desires (*rényù*) and desires (*yù*) *simpliciter*⁹³. In our ZZYL-record, this distinction between desires (*yú*) and human desires (*rényù*) is made to do quite a lot of work: for, he thinks, while human desires (*rényù*) are bad, ‘the mind of man’ is not straightforwardly bad; it is merely perilous, so the two cannot be identical. In the process of making this clear, Zhu says some things that are very germane to my present purposes:

人心是此身有知覺，有嗜欲者，如所謂『我欲仁』，『從心所欲』，『性之欲也，感於物而動』，此豈能無！⁹⁴

The mind of man is this body’s having awareness [*zhījué*]; its having preferences and desires, like [what Confucius says about] ‘I desire humaneness [and there will be humaneness]’, ‘following the heart’s desires [without going against the standard]’, [and what the *Record of Music* says about] ‘[it is] the desires of one’s nature [that make one] stirred by things and move’, how could one be without these!

The argument here is fairly clear; Zhu thinks that, if you read the text properly, it will be obvious that the ‘mind transmission’ talks about the various workings of the mind, not only those which can be tied directly to something of moral significance, so giving up ‘the mind of man’ would involve giving something one cannot do without. Here several things of interest

⁹³ In our texts at least. However, Zhang Liwen pp. xx-xx shows, while the broad tendency is towards Zhu drawing this distinction, he was not always consistent. Whether this reflects a deep change of heart or merely occasional terminological slackness is not known and both seem possible.

⁹⁴ ZZYL, *juan* 62, p. 1488

are said which I think hang together: when one speaks of ‘the mind of man’, what one in reality is speaking of is one’s body even having ‘awareness’ (*zhījué*); having likes and desires. ‘Likes and desires’ are apposite to ‘awareness’ (*zhījué*). His impassioned defence of desires (*yù*) comes in the form of three quotations from sources beyond reproach; two from the *Analects* and one from the *Record of Music*. None of these passages neutral ones for Zhu; the two former, *qua* parts of the *Analects* are ones he had commented on; and he also wrote a commentary on specifically this passage in the *Record of Music*. The two former quotations show two kinds of desire (*yù*) that are, in different ways, laudable; desiring (*yù*) humaneness (*ren*) is surely a fine thing; and the desires of a sage in his moral prime at the age of seventy are, as the original *Analects*-passage says, of the right sort. The quotation from the *Record of Music* seems different from these; the original passage in the text describes how humans come into the world and begin to interact with it; something far less laudable than the desire to be humane (*ren*) or the desires of a sage. The original text reads:

人生而靜，天之性也；感於物而動，性之欲也。⁹⁵

That men are still when they are born is [on account of] their Heavenly nature [*tiān zhī xìng*]; that they are stirred by things and move is [on account of] the desires of one’s nature.

We are here dealing with something basic. My contention is that this text provides us with as good evidence as we are going to get that awareness (*zhījué*) is understood on the same ‘stimulus and response’ (*gǎnyìng*) 感應⁹⁶-model as the desires of one’s nature (*xìng zhī yù*) are here described. If Zhu’s interpretation of the passage does not suggest otherwise, the model will be taken to be the basis of our understanding of ‘awareness’ (*zhījué*) by force of the apposition between ‘awareness’ (*zhījué*) and ‘preferences and desires’ above. Let us see how Zhu read the *Record of Music*-passage:

樂記曰：『人生而靜，天之性也；感於物而動，性之欲也』，何也？曰：此言性情之妙，人之所生而有者也。蓋人受天地之中以生，其未感也，純粹至善，萬理具焉，所謂性也。然有是性，則有是形，有是形則即有是心，而不能無感

⁹⁵ *Yueji*, section 7

⁹⁶ This model of causality, which may in fact have had its origin in discussions of music, has sympathetic resonance as its central metaphor; one string is sounded and stirs (*gǎn*) another to respond (*yìng*). For an interesting discussion of the early history of this model, see Brindley 2013, p. 108 and note 83 pp. 192.193, for its widespread use by Zhu in explaining natural and mental phenomena, see Kim, pp. 122-128.

於物，感於物而動，則性之欲者出焉，而善惡於是乎分矣；性之欲，即所謂情也。⁹⁷

The *Record of Music* says: ‘That men are still when they are born is [on account of] their Heavenly nature [*tiān zhī xìng*]; when they are stirred by things and move [the result is]⁹⁸ the desires of one’s nature [*xìng*].’, what does this mean? I would say: This describes the wondrous [workings] of nature and emotions [*qǐng*], this is what men have at birth. For when they receive the mean of Heaven and Earth so as to be born, they are not yet stirred; they are pure and perfectly good, all patterns are provided in them; this is called ‘nature’ [*xìng*]. That said, having this nature [*xìng*], they have this form [*xíng*], and having this form [*xíng*] is simply having this mind [*xīn*] and being unable to not be stirred by things; when one is stirred by things and moves, the desires of one’s nature emerge from it, and this is where good and bad are divided, the desires of one’s nature are what is called ‘emotions’ [*qíng*]

We will note that we will not find any direct evidence for or against the claim that ‘awareness’ (*zhījué*) is understood on the *gǎnyìng*-model, for the simple reason that the term makes no appearance at all in the quoted passage. Yet the placement of the quoted passage within the ZZYL-record, as an argument for the necessity of ‘the mind of man’, suggests that the inference that this passage provides us with insight into the nature of ‘awareness’ (*zhījué*) has some validity. Let us consider how Zhu here describes the entry of human beings into mindedness: He says that having a mind of a certain sort, which one does by simply having a ‘form’ (*xíng*) and ‘nature’ (*xìng*) of certain sorts, necessitates being ‘stirred by things’. What this consists in, to borrow the musical metaphor, is that strings are struck in one’s environment and one’s mind resonates with some kind of ‘emotion’ (*qíng*). In fact, the text says, having a mind consists in precisely that.

This shows that, for Zhu, responding is something the mind would do even if it did nothing else. This means that the thrust of the argument above is that, were one to give up one’s ‘mind of man’, what one *really* would be giving up would be one’s basic ability to interact with the world. We will further notice the identification of the ‘desires of one’s nature’ (*xìng zhī yù*) and emotions (*qǐng*) and next notice that the verb used of these ‘desires as emotions’ is ‘emerge’ (*chū*). This suggests that the relationship between these things and the mind is similar to that between ‘awareness’ (*zhījué*) and the mind. We can further see that

⁹⁷ 樂記動靜說 *Explanation the terms ‘movement’ and ‘stillness’ in the Record of Music* ZZWJ, *juan* 67, pp. 3371-3372

⁹⁸ What is supplied in the parenthesis is changed from the translation above in light of Zhu’s reading of the passage.

there are several records in the ZZYL where the ‘two minds’ are connected with various kinds of emotions (*qǐng*)⁹⁹, which we may also take as suggestive.

If the responses we have been discussing and ‘awareness’ (*zhījué*) are to be thus identified, one may ask, why doesn’t Zhu just say ‘emotion’ (*qǐng*)? While it is dangerous to speculate about such things, what seems to me to be the significance in our texts is the following: As we shall see in the next chapter, the kinds of responses subsumed under the term ‘awareness’ (*zhījué*) is slightly different from what one usually finds grouped under ‘emotion’ (*qǐng*), in that it contains everything from sensitivity to changes in temperature to thirst and hunger; to moral responses of various kinds. More substantively, the texts describe ‘awareness’ (*zhījué*) as involving some kind of understanding of the situation one finds oneself in. What this means is that one’s ‘awareness’ (*zhījué*) will be intimately tied to the situation in which one is ‘stirred by things’. At the same time, in particular the *Preface to the Mean* places a substantial weight on the ‘origins’ in determining the nature of the different kinds of awareness (*zhījué*)¹⁰⁰ and the important role this in turn plays in Zhu’s explanation of the ‘mind transmission’, it seems worthwhile to consider what these ‘origins’ consist of.

Static and dynamic concepts

Now that the case has been more or less adequately made that awareness (*zhījué*) is a response of the mind to some external situation, we will look at the origins of this awareness (*zhījué*). In this my argument will be that, unlike Zhu’s other forays into moral psychology where something mental ‘emerges’ out of something else, most notably in his commentaries on the *Mencius* and *The Mean*, is that what we are describing here as ‘origins’; the ‘moral constitution’ (*xìngmìng*) and the ‘physical constitution’ (*xíngqì*) are what we may call dynamic concepts. Dynamic concepts of what, exactly? I am inclined to answer: Dynamic

⁹⁹Both the ‘Mencian’ emotions (*qǐng*): ‘惻隱羞惡，道心也’ (ZZYL, *juan* 78, p. 2011) ‘Commiseration, shame and disgust, these are [characteristic of] the mind of the Way.’ and the more prosaic one’s from *The Mean*: ‘如喜怒，人心也。[...]須是喜其所當喜，怒其所當怒，乃是道心。’ (ZZYL, *ibid.*) ‘Take elation and anger, they are [characteristic of] the mind of man. [...] It is required that one is elated at what one should be elated at, be angry about what one should be angry about, this is the mind of the Way’. For several reasons, we also assume that these ‘emotions’ (*qǐng*), when spoken of in connection with ‘the two minds’ are to be subsumed under the rubric ‘awareness’ (*zhījué*)

¹⁰⁰ I here have the following remark in mind: ‘[...]其或生於形氣之私，或原於性命之正，而所以為知覺者不同[...]’ ‘[...] is that some awareness [*zhījué*] is born from the self-centredness of one’s physical constitution [*xíngqì*] and some awareness [*zhījué*] originates in the correctness of one’s normative constitution [*xìngmìng*], and the way in which they are awareness [*zhījué*] is not the same[...]

concepts of ‘that-which-underlies-responses’. Among pre-modern Chinese philosophers, and especially after the ‘Learning of the Dark’ (*xuanxue*) 玄學-movement of the Wei 魏 and Jin 晉, there was a tremendous amount of interest in explaining interactive, dynamic phenomena through something underlying¹⁰¹. Of course, for Wang Bi 王弼, one of the early masters of this art of explanation, what underlies the interactive, dynamic phenomena is something that lacks *all* the features of said phenomena, it ‘is not’ (*wú*) 無.

I take the term ‘nature’ (*xìng*) 性 as it is used in Zhu’s commentaries on the *Mencius* and *The Mean* to be a part of a similar explanatory endeavour; that is, explaining a multitude of human responses by reference to something which itself is not part of those responses. The difference between Zhu and Wang Bi in this regard, it must be pointed out, is that ‘nature’ (*xìng*) has a positive push in certain directions¹⁰². In what follows, we will take to be pursuing the hypothesis that the difference in terminology means something; what I take to be the difference between Zhu’s talk of ‘nature’ (*xìng*) in those commentaries and his talk about ‘physical constitution’ (*xíngqì*) and ‘normative constitution’ (*xìngmìng*) in our texts is that this latter pair seems to express the following thought: Prior to any (particular) responses there is already a great deal of ‘interaction’ between factors that all have to be said to influence the nature of any particular response and these factors can be broadly divided up along the axes ‘physical’ (*xíng*) and ‘normative’ (*xìng*)¹⁰³. That is, I think one’s ‘form’ (*xíng*) on its own is a static term that exerts a certain ‘push’ in the direction of certain kinds of responses, not in the direction of moral responses, but in the direction of physical responses. Furthermore along these axes ‘that-which-underlies-responses’ is determined in its concrete expression by, respectively, one’s ‘*pneuma*’ (*qì*) and ‘what is ordained’ (*mìng*). One’s ‘*pneuma*’ (*qì*) effects the functioning and responsivity of one’s body, and ‘what is ordained’ (*mìng*) plays a role in determining what kind of situations one finds oneself in, and these in turn determine what kinds of moral responses one will even have occasion to have. It is in this sense I think we are dealing with dynamic concepts.

While, as we saw in the introduction and in the last chapter, Zhu’s talk of ‘the two minds’ has been discussed in several places, the terms ‘physical constitution’ (*xíngqì*) and ‘normative constitution’ (*xìngmìng*) have not, so far as I know, been subjected to any scrutiny.

¹⁰¹ The technical term being ‘that by which it is thus’ (*suǒ yǐ rǎn*) 所以然. Two good discussions of this term are Wagner 2003 *passim*. and Zheng 2011, pp. 191-228

¹⁰² I.e. in the direction of ‘humanity, rightness, ritual and wisdom’ (*ren yi li zhi*) 仁義禮智.

¹⁰³ ‘Nature’ (*xìng*) having normative force for Zhu, see Shun 2010, p. 178

To this tendency there is one exception; in an article on Zhu's commentary on *The Mean*, Chen Lai explains what he takes the terms to be used to convey:

That the mind of man originates in the self-centredness of *xíngqì* and that the mind of the Way originates in the correctness of *xìngmìng*, is merely to say that the mind of man originates in the physical form [*xíngtǐ*] formed [*xíng chéng*] from one's receipt of *pneuma* [*qì*] and that the mind of the Way issues from the original nature [*běn xìng*] formed [*xíngchéng*] from one's receipt of pattern [*lǐ*]¹⁰⁴.

So far as I can make out, Cheng's understanding of the passage can be described as something like the state of the art. So, what is the difference between what he's saying and what I'm driving at? As far as '[...] physical form formed from one's receipt of *pneuma* [*qì*]' I'm not sure there is much difference to speak, although I will emphasise that for Zhu, '*pneuma*' (*qì*) is a changeable thing, something Chen does not here make explicit. Where it is clear to me that I and Chen depart is when it comes to the 'normative constitution' (*xìngmìng*). Chen takes the term *xìngmìng* to be identical with 'original nature' (*běn xìng*) 本性, which, where it occurs, seems to mean the same as 'nature' (*xìng*) *simpliciter*. It will be one of the gains of this chapter to describe another way of taking it. I will begin to make my reading clear in the next section.

3.2 Two Dynamic Origins

We will now attempt to provide some basis for and meat to the account sketched above of the nature of the 'origins' of 'awareness' (*zhījué*). Based on the explanation in the *Preface* it is at the 'origins' that the real difference between 'the two minds' is to be found, so it is of some value to be clear about these if we want to understand Zhu's interpretation as a whole.

Unfortunately, none of our texts are immediately forthcoming with the details of what these terms are meant to signify, but some clues may be found. In fact, two things Zhu says seem to me to be of some importance in suggesting what he means by the terms we are glossing 'normative constitution' (*xìngmìng*) and 'physical constitution' (*xíngqì*). The two things he says that I find suggestive are the following: While summarising the contents of Zheng Kexue's understanding of Zhu's interpretation of the 'mind transmission', Zhu zeroes in on a formulation that suggests that Zheng was a tad slow in realising that 'the mind of man' is not

¹⁰⁴ 人心根源于形气之私, 道心根源于性命之正, 也就是说人心根源于人所禀受的气所形成的形体, 道心发源于人所禀受的理所形成的本性。Chen, 2007, p.3

something one gets rid of, and at first Zhu treats the idea of getting rid one's 'mind of man' as quaint, for as he says:

人心出於形氣，如何去得！¹⁰⁵

The mind of man emerges from one's physical constitution, how would one be rid of it?

He then goes on to sketch two ways in which these two 'origins' may affect one's life, for better or worse (These two stories we will return to in the following chapter), and when describing what we in the following chapter will be calling a successful life he says:

如其達性命之理，則雖人心之用，而無非道心，孟子所以指形色為天性者以此。若不明踐形之義，則與告子『食、色』之言又何以異？¹⁰⁶

If one understands the pattern [*li*] of one's normative constitution [*xìngmìng*], then even if it is the mind of man that manifests, it would still be nothing but the mind of the Way; the reason Mencius points to form and appearance as being heavenly nature is just this. If one does not understand the meaning of 'realising one's form' [*jiàn xíng*]¹⁰⁷, how would this be any different from what Gaozi says about 'eating and looks'?

Again the argument is that it would be silly to want to get rid of one's 'mind of man', but the reason is something else. What we will see to be the reason is that 'the mind of man'-responses are necessary for 'mind of the Way'-responses, that is, that moral responses, as they too happen in the real world are dependent on physical responses. In service of this line of reasoning, Zhu enlists *Mencius* 7A.38 to say that indeed, one's 'form' (*xíng*) is a thing to realise (*jian*). As my purpose here is merely to describe the points of departure of our discussions below, this will have to suffice. The point we will derive from this is analogous to what we said above about the 'normative constitution' (*xìngmìng*); that one's 'form' (*xíng*) is an idealisation which it behoves one to do one's best to realise and that one's ability to do this is helped along or constrained by one's 'pneuma' (*qì*). The way in which we will be reaching this conclusion is by following the inter-textual trail left us by Zhu himself; by saying what he says in the above quotation he is endorsing the relevance of that passage in the *Mencius* in interpreting what he is here saying.

¹⁰⁵ ZZYL, *juan* 62, p. 1488

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ I must here add that this translation of the Mencian term is very much in light of Zhu's understanding of it; as Yang Rur-bin points out, this passage is one which has attracted a great deal of very differing interpretations throughout the ages, a good discussion of these interpretations is found in Yang 2014 pp. 129-172.

A second clue we will have to follow up comes when Zhu, later in the same ZZYL-record, returns to the same topic; those who would say that ‘the mind of man’ is a thing best gotten rid of, and on returning to the topic he has evidently become less amused, for this time he resorts to name-calling:

若只守道心，而欲屏去人心，則是判性命為二物，而所謂道心者，空虛無有，將流於釋老之學，而非虞書之所指者。¹⁰⁸

If one merely keeps the mind of the Way and wishes to separate off the mind of man, then that would be to divide up nature [xìng] and what is ordained [mìng] as two things, and what one would then be calling ‘the mind of the Way’, would be empty and non-existent, it would flow off into the teachings of the Buddhists and Daoists, and it wouldn’t be what the book of Yu¹⁰⁹ points to.

What I take to suggest the reading I mentioned above is found in what looks like a *reductio ad absurdum* in this quotation; namely that it would be absurd to consider ‘nature’ (xìng) and ‘what is ordained’ (mìng) as two things, something which seems to blatantly contradict my suggestion that the term ‘normative constitution’ (xíngqì) contains a great deal of dynamism. There are two different passages in texts commented on by Zhu that seem directly pertinent here; *The Mean*’s assertion of identity between ‘nature’ (xìng) and ‘what heaven ordains’ (tiānmìng) and a difficult saying in *Mencius* 7B.24, where what belongs to one’s ‘nature’ (xìng) and what belongs to ‘what is ordained’ (mìng) is explicitly made a problem. So the first step in our investigation is to follow up these suggestions. One could be forgiven for thinking that an excessively heavy load is here put on a mere few words. This is nonetheless not the case, I would claim; especially in the case of one’s ‘normative constitution’ (xìngmìng), Zhu has not just chosen any random pair of words, but a pair to which considerable interpretive effort is put several places in the ZZYL. Furthermore, the dynamic picture I am arguing for in our interpretation of these ‘origins’ has some very important consequences for the ethical picture we take Zhu to be developing in these texts; after all, if the basis of one’s ‘awareness’ (zhījué) is something that to some extent changes with the times, then the same would no doubt hold for whatever ‘awareness’ (zhījué) is.

The dynamics of the body: The Physical Constitution

¹⁰⁸ ZZYL, *ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ Collective name for the section of the *Shangshu* where *The Counsels of the Great Yu* is included.

Above, we quoted Zhu in asserting that Mencius, who was never recorded to have had any opinion on the ‘two minds’, was making precisely the same point as Zhu when he said that ‘form’ (*xíng*) and ‘appearance’ (*sè*) are one’s ‘heavenly nature’ (*tiān xìng*), and that Mencius really got it right was in emphasising the need to ‘realise one’s form’ (*jiàn xíng*). This suggests that looking at what Zhu has to say about the relevant passage in the *Mencius* is a sound choice. There is of course the possibility that Zhu is merely throwing about quotations that happen to contain some of the same terms he is currently using; the problem with an uncharitable reading here, is that, as far as I can see, it fails to even make coherent sense of the text, and as we shall see interesting sense *can* be made of the text by assuming that Zhu actually means what he says. Accordingly we will now consider what Zhu has to say about *Mencius* 7A.38. The main text says that:

形色，天性也；惟聖人，然後可以踐形。¹¹⁰

Form and appearance, these belong to our Heavenly nature [*tiānxìng*]; but only a sage may realise his form [*jiàn xíng*].

As we pointed out above in footnote 2, this was a very hotly debated passage. As a comparison we may note that Zhao Qi 趙岐, the very influential Han-dynasty commentator on the *Mencius*, takes ‘form’ (*xíng*) and ‘appearance’ (*sè*) to be, respectively, male and female physical good looks. The crucial term ‘realising the form’ (*jiàn xíng*), that only the sage is capable of, he takes as being because the sage has some sort of virtue in addition to his natural endowment of good looks, and in having this ‘completes his form’ (*jiàn xíng*)¹¹¹. For Zhu it is very different; one of his claims to fame is the notion that our ‘nature’ (*xìng*) guarantees our ability, in principle, of becoming sages, and that this ‘nature’ (*xìng*) consists, not in anything simply physical, but in an ability to act morally. Accordingly, his interpretation is very different from that of Zhao:

人之有形有色，無不各有自然之理，所謂天性也。¹¹²

Humans’ having form and appearance, there is nothing in this that does not have a spontaneous pattern [*zìrán zhī lǐ*]; this is what is meant by heavenly nature [*tiān xìng*]

For Zhu this is not so much a gendered matter as for Zhao¹¹³; everyone has ‘form’ (*xíng*) and ‘appearance’ (*sè*), and in all of it there is a ‘pattern’ (*lǐ*). While there is a lot of talk in Zhu

¹¹⁰ Quoted from *SSJZ*, p. 368

¹¹¹ See Yang 2014, pp.130-131

¹¹² *SSJZ*, p. 368

about ‘things’ (*wù*) 物 having ‘pattern’, it is, as Zheng Zemian points out¹¹⁴, a far snugger fit when it is used to speak of activities; for what Zhu tends to mean by the term ‘pattern’ (*lǐ*) (And given the sheer variety of uses it is dangerous to generalise, whole books have been written on the term) is that for any given thing or activity, there is a right way of going about it. This right way of going about it is defined by what the thing or activity fundamentally is. What might that mean in our present case? Several records in the ZZYL indicate that what Zhu takes to be the meaning of ‘realising the form’ (*jiàn xíng*) is getting the various functions of the body to work properly:

踐形，人有形，形必有性。耳，形也，必盡其聰，然後能踐耳之形；目，形也，必盡其明，然後能踐目之形。踐形，如踐言之「踐」。¹¹⁵

To realise one’s form [*jiàn xíng*]; humans have form [*xíng*], and that form [*xíng*] necessarily has a nature [*xìng*]. The ears; they are part of one’s form [*xíng*], but one must make one’s hearing utterly clear, and only then may one realise the form of the ears [*jiàn ěr zhī xíng*]; the eyes; they are a part of one’s form, but one must make one’s seeing utterly clear, and only then may one realise the form of the eyes. To realise one’s form [*jiàn xíng*], this is the ‘*jiàn*’ of ‘keeping a promise’ [‘carrying out one’s word’]

So what is at issue when Zhu speaks of ‘form’ (*xíng*) is the body and its various functions. But Zhu evidently does not think the body is something one merely has, it can be better or worse, and the best possible way in which the body can work is part and parcel of it, so to speak. This is why Zhu glosses the term ‘practice/carry out’ (*jiàn*) as ‘the *jiàn* of ‘keeping a promise’ (‘carrying out one’s word’)’. To give a feeling for how this connects with responsiveness and plays a determining role in that, I would add this specification of what he thinks these different functions consist in:

天之生人，人之得於天，其具耳目口鼻者，莫不皆有此理。耳便必當無有不聰，目便必當無有不明，口便必能盡別天下之味，鼻便必能盡別天下之臭。¹¹⁶

When Heaven gives life to men, what they receive from Heaven, that is, having ears, eyes, mouths and noses, they all have this pattern [*lǐ*]. The ears *must* have nothing they do not hear well; the eyes *must* have nothing they do not see well; the mouth *must*

¹¹³ Of course, nothing in the grammar absolutely rules out a gendered reading, the following text is my reason for the present reading: ‘形，只是這形體。色，如『臨喪則有哀色，介冑則有不可犯之色』之類’ ‘Form’, here is merely this body. ‘Appearance’ is like ‘when in mourning, one will have a sad countenance [appearance], dressed in armour, one has appearance of admitting no offence [against oneself]’ and the like’ ZZYL, *juan* 60, p.1452

¹¹⁴ See Zheng 2011, pp. 191-228

¹¹⁵ ZZYL, *juan* 60, p. 1452

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

distinguish all the flavours of the world and the nose *must* distinguish all smells of the world.

Which is to say that the ‘functions’ in question do not consist in simply receiving impressions from the senses, but to actively distinguish different things one is faced with in the world, whether it is sounds, sights, tastes or smells, in short: to respond differentially.

This normative sense of the term ‘form’ (*xíng*) is what I take to be operative in the term ‘physical constitution’ (*xíngqì*); what I will take the whole term together to mean is something like ‘the overall state of one’s body as effected by the tendencies of one’s ‘form’ (*xíng*) towards ideal functioning, understood as being able to respond differentially¹¹⁷, and as determined by the state of one’s ‘*pneuma*’ (*qì*)’.

We have now seen that Zhu has this normative sense of ‘form’ (*xíng*) as something to be achieved; but we have not yet made the case that one’s ‘*pneuma*’ (*qì*) is the sort of thing that can influence that achievement. This we will now do by asking how Zhu explains that only a sage may ‘realise his form’ (*jiàn xíng*). To this Zhu has several answers, one of which seems pertinent to our discussion. Having described how the body, having its various functions, compels one to be clear-sighted and good of hearing, he says that in this regard

[..] 聖人與常人都一般。惟眾人有氣稟之雜，物欲之累，雖同是耳也而不足於聰
[...].¹¹⁸

[...] the sage and ordinary people are of a kind. It is only that the masses of people have a mixed endowment of *pneuma*, and are weighed down by material desires, so despite their ears’ being the same [as those of the sage], but they are insufficient for clear hearing [...]

There are here two factors that are claimed to negatively affect one’s ability to ‘realise one’s form’ (*jiàn xíng*): one’s endowment of ‘*pneuma*’ (*qì*) and desiring things (*wùyù*). As I understand it, the former would be a physical reason for not being able ‘realise one’s form’ (*jiàn xíng*) and this is what we are here interested in; the latter would be something like a psychological reason; one is so busy chasing after the various things one desires that one doesn’t muster the kind of sustained concentration that self-perfection requires. We will see ‘desire’ (*yù*) turn up again in the next chapter as both a necessity of life and as a potential

¹¹⁷ It is a peculiar thing that Hansen’s 1995, pp. 197-202 gloss of what goes on in pre-Qin ‘emotions’ (*qíng*) should here reappear as ‘awareness’ (*zhījué*), but it seems the introduction of Buddhism did not have quite the effect that Hansen sometimes speaks as if it did, namely to make Chinese thinkers basically European. Concerns, ways of speaking and ways of thinking from before the introduction of Buddhism persisted and interacted with the new concerns, ways of speaking and ways of thinking that followed Buddhism into China.

¹¹⁸ ZZYL, *juan* 60, pp. 1452

hindrance to moral action. At present it is the ‘*pneuma*’ (*qi*) that will concern us, and Zhu here very evidently has the widespread thought of different qualities of ‘*pneuma*’ (*qi*) in mind, i.e. that the stuff the world is made of can be either ‘clear’ (*qīng*) 清 or ‘muddy’ (*zhuó*) 濁. The clear ‘*pneuma*’ (*qi*) expresses ‘pattern’ (*lǐ*) with relative ease; that is to say that whatever is made up of clear ‘*pneuma*’ (*qi*) will have little trouble functioning as it is supposed to. The converse holds for muddy ‘*pneuma*’ (*qi*)¹¹⁹.

What I am attempting to get at here is that in using the term ‘physical constitution’ (*xíngqì*), he is using its constituents in a very particular way: especially ‘form’ (*xíng*), he seems to expect his readers (listeners?) to take in a sense which it doesn’t necessarily have in common parlance. For as most of us the term ‘form’ (*xíng*) could happily mean something like ‘body’; the body one happens to have, it can be a fine thing or a less fine thing, perhaps one can improve it? In Zhu’s usage here, the term ‘physical constitution’ (*xíngqì*) comes closer to this; one’s ‘form’ (*xíng*) remains the same regardless of what one does; it is that of a person. What one can do something about is the degree to which one’s ‘form’ (*xíng*) is realised (*jiàn*), and in this the ‘*pneuma*’ (*qi*) of which one consists may either be of help or an obstruction. It is in this sense that I call this a dynamic ‘origin’ of ‘awareness’ (*zhījué*); for one’s ‘*pneuma*’ (*qi*) is the sort of thing that is liable to change. We will return to this later in this chapter when we attempt to make sense of what sort of a mental event ‘awareness’ (*zhījué*) is.

The dynamics of morality: The Normative Constitution

Having now argued that the term ‘physical constitution’ (*xíngqì*) denotes a dynamic concept, something that can be seen from its two constituents, I will now argue that the same holds in much the same way for the term ‘normative constitution’ (*xìngmìng*). What we at the outset of this chapter presented as a reason for thinking this, was a saying of Zhu’s in our ZZYL-record that seemed to say exactly the opposite, namely the following:

¹¹⁹ Which is to say that I take Zhu to generally mean something like the following when he speaks of the ‘*pneuma*’ (*qi*) of persons: ‘人之生，適遇其氣，有得清者，有得濁者，貴賤壽夭皆然，故有參錯不齊如此。聖賢在上，則其氣中和；不然，則其氣偏行。故有得其氣清，聰明而無福祿者；亦有得其氣濁，有福祿而無知者，皆其氣數使然’ ZZYL, *juan* 1, p. 8 ‘When men are born, they happen upon their *pneuma* [*qi*], some receive the clear [*pneuma* (*qi*)], and some receive the muddied; noble, base, long and short life all are like this, and so one all these sorts of inequalities. The sages and worthies are at the top, and their *pneuma* [*qi*] is measured and harmonious; otherwise their *pneuma* [*qi*] [that of those who are otherwise] will one-sidedly wander off. So there are those who receive clear *pneuma* [*qi*], sharp and perceptive [*cóngmíng*] yet who simply cannot catch a break; conversely there are those whose *pneuma* [*qi*] is muddied, who are fortunate and stupid, both these states of affairs are caused by *pneuma* [*qi*] and allotment [lit. ‘numbers’].

若只守道心，而欲屏去人心，則是判性命為二物，而所謂道心者，空虛無有
[...]。¹²⁰

If one merely keeps the mind of the Way and wishes to separate off the mind of man, then that would be to divide up nature [*xìng*] and what is ordained [*mìng*] as two things, and what one would then be calling ‘the mind of the Way’, would be empty and non-existent [...]

What is Zhu saying here? He is saying that only keeping one’s ‘mind of the Way’ and wishing to be rid of ‘the mind of man’, commits one to regarding ‘nature’ (*xìng*) and ‘what is ordained’ (*mìng*) as different things, and what one would be calling the ‘mind of the Way’ would be something entirely without substance. There is much to say about this, but what we will be discussing here is the implicit claim that it would be stupid to regard ‘nature’ (*xìng*) and ‘what is ordained’ (*mìng*) as different things. What would follow from taking this implicit claim at face value would be that any dynamism I would wish to claim, is simply not going to happen; one cannot, without equivocation, claim something to be in a dynamic relationship with itself. However, the texts that Zhu seems to be alluding to suggest a far more complex picture, one which I will now first describe in its rough outline and then substantiate with readings of the relevant texts.

What I take Zhu to be saying, on the background of the texts we will be reading, is something of the following order: Humans have a propensity for moral responses that they are born with, this is their ‘nature’ (*xìng*) and to ‘act out’ one’s ‘nature’ (*xìng*) and respond morally is a large part of what a flourishing life¹²¹ consists in. Responding morally is not something one does in a vacuum; in order to do it, there must be things and events to which one may respond. What things and events one faces through the course of one’s life are not completely within one’s own power, they are, to a great extent ‘ordained’ (*mìng*). These events and things can be more or less conducive to one’s ‘acting out’ one’s ‘nature’ (*xìng*), and at any rate ‘what is ordained’ (*mìng*) for one determines the precise ways in which one ‘acts out’ one’s ‘nature’ (*xìng*). In that the actual expression throughout one’s life of one’s ‘nature’ (*xìng*) is determined by ‘what is ordained’ (*mìng*) for one they are ‘the same’. The meaning of this last remark is that for any given individual it doesn’t make sense to speak of one’s ‘nature’ (*xìng*) and what is ‘ordained’ (*mìng*) for one separately.

¹²⁰ ZZYL, *juan* 62, p. 1488

¹²¹ Cf. Shun 2010, p.178

The story I have just told is a very broad outline with an emphasis on what I take to be of importance, and anything that would unnecessarily complicate the picture deemphasised. As we shall now see, the texts do not allow us such a direct identification of ‘what is ordained’ (*mìng*) and ‘the things and events one encounters throughout life’ as has been done above. The identification will be seen to be justified enough, but not so directly. What complicates the matter is that Zhu uses the term ‘what is ordained’ (*mìng*) to mean at least two things *and* insists that these two things are the same.¹²² These two senses, we will now see, are 1. What is conferred to one at birth, namely one’s ‘nature’ (*xìng*); and 2. One’s realisation of what that ‘nature’ (*xìng*) throughout life. We will begin by looking at a text very obviously suggested by Zhu’s formulation in the above quotation, namely Zhu’s commentary on the very first line of *The Mean*:

天命之謂性，率性之謂道，脩道之謂教。¹²³

What Heaven ordains [*tian mìng*] is called nature [*xìng*]; to follow one’s nature [*xìng*] is called the Way; to regulate this Way is called teaching.

This translation includes quite a lot of Zhu’s understanding of the text,¹²⁴ but let us see what he has to say in detail, in particular regarding the terms we are interested in:

命，猶令也。性，即理也。天以陰陽五行化生萬物，氣以成形，而理亦賦焉，猶命令也。於是人物之生，因各得其所賦之理，以為健順五常之德，所謂性也。率，循也。道，猶路也。人物各循其性之自然，則其日用事物之間，莫不各有當行之路，是則所謂道也。¹²⁵

‘What is ordained’ [*mìng*] is like a command. ‘Nature’ [*xìng*] is simply pattern [*lǐ*]. Heaven uses *yin*, *yang* and the five agents [*wǔxíng*] to transform and give life to the ten thousand things; [Heaven] employs *pneuma* [*qì*] to complete their form [*xíng*] and a pattern [*lǐ*] is imparted along with it, it works as a command [*mìng lìng*]. This being so, when humans and things are born, each receives the pattern [*lǐ*] bestowed upon them, and they employ this in establishing and following the virtue [*de*] of the Five Constants [*wǔ cháng*], this is called nature [*xìng*]. ‘To follow’ [*shuài*], here it means ‘to follow’ [*xún*]. ‘Way’ [*dào*], it’s like a road. If humans and things each follow what comes spontaneously from their nature, then among daily activities all will have a road they must follow, when it is like this it is called the Way.

¹²² Tang 2005, p. 385 counts three different uses, but the third need not concern us.

¹²³ Quoted from *SSZJJZ*, p.17

¹²⁴ For two interesting and very different approaches to *The Mean* itself, see Ames 2001 and Johnston & Wang 2012

¹²⁵ *SSZJJZ*, *ibid.*

Here there is much to discuss, what seems to be of prime importance is the claimed identity between ‘nature’ (*xìng*) and ‘what is ordained’ (*mìng*). What does this identity consist in here? Their identity emerges in the meeting point between two very distinct perspectives; that of Heaven (*tiān*) and an individual human. From the point of view of Heaven (*tiān*), what it does is to give shape to and develop everything (It both gives life and transforms), and from this process ‘pattern’ (*lǐ*) follows of its own accord. What we will note is that what is actually ‘given’ to everything in this process is ‘*pneuma*’ (*qì*); the ‘pattern’ (*lǐ*) of which various things’ ‘natures’ (*xìng*) consist merely follows ‘of itself’. If something exists, it is a part of this transaction; ‘what is ordained’ (*mìng*) is ordained to everything in particular, so so long as we are speaking of ‘what is ordained’ (*mìng*) we are speaking of everything that exists being made to work in concert.

What being made to work in concert consists in is that in being formed and transformed *everything* has a ‘pattern’ (*lǐ*), which we will remember that we glossed informally above as ‘a way of getting it right’. When using the term ‘pattern’ (*lǐ*) we are speaking at a different ‘level’ than when we are speaking of ‘what is ordained’ (*mìng*); for the sake of brevity we can say that ‘pattern’ (*lǐ*) is something that everything (Including events, activities and relationships) has individually, so one can see Zhu speaking of the ‘pattern’ (*lǐ*) of ruler and minister, of grass as having ‘pattern’ (*lǐ*), of people as having ‘pattern’ (*lǐ*) and so forth. In our text above Zhu calls this ‘pattern’ (*lǐ*) ‘like a command’ (*yóu mìng lìng*), which sounds a bit more strict than the ‘pattern’ (*lǐ*) we encountered above when speaking of ‘form’ (*xíng*) which seemed to be more like a promise, but the point is similar; it is something that can and should be realised. When something like a person has a ‘pattern’ (*lǐ*), it serves as a basis both for establishing and adhering to the sorts of relationships that humans require to flourish, and it is given another name: ‘nature’ (*xìng*). What the text seems to say is that in the same sense as this ‘pattern’ (*lǐ*) of a person can serve as the basis for establishing and adhering to the required relationships, so it will also suggest in a given situation which path or road it is best to follow, one need merely follow it.¹²⁶

¹²⁶ I will here merely point out the marked difference between Zhu’s reading of this text and Seligman et al.’s reading of an excavated text that seems part of the same discursive climate as *The Mean*, namely the *Nature emerges from Command* 性自命出; in Seligman et al. 2008 pp. 32-34, they say that the text paints a picture of a fundamentally messy world, one where people are endowed with natures, sure enough, but these are directionless, and there is nothing except for the pragmatic criterion of what happens to work to tell us how to get things right in life and morals. In our text ‘what is ordained’ (*mìng*) gives a direction to nothing short of everything.

Thus far we have seen that ‘what is ordained’ (*mìng*) for everything is the ‘nature’ (*xìng*) that follows from being given life to and transformed by ‘Heaven’ (*tiān*) through ‘pneuma’ (*qì*). Taking ‘what is ordained’ (*mìng*) to contain within it ‘the events and things one meets with through life’ seems, based on the above, fairly far-fetched. Thus far, we can see it to be used to describe the state of the whole phenomenal world only in one sense: That what is ‘ordained’ (*mìng*) is that everything work in concert so that everything flourishes. Yet, as Zhu and we all are aware, everyone and everything *do not* in fact work in concert and we do not all flourish, so there is something missing in this story and as we shall see, ‘what is ordained’ (*mìng*) is part of our collective non-flourishing as well.

The dynamic interplay of one’s ‘nature’ (*xìng*) and ‘what is ordained’ (*mìng*) emerges more clearly in Zhu’s discussion of *Mencius* 7B.24, where the relationship between ‘what is ordained’ (*mìng*) and ‘nature’ (*xìng*) is problematized. Zhu evidently found the passage incredibly difficult, so we should not expect easy going¹²⁷:

口之於味也，目之於色也，耳之於聲也，鼻之於臭也，四肢之於安佚也，性也，有命焉，君子不謂性也。仁之於父子也，義之於君臣也，禮之於賓主也，智之於賢者也，聖人之於天道也，命也，有性焉，君子不謂命也。¹²⁸

The mouth with regard to flavour; the eyes with regard to appearance; the ears with regard to sound; the nose with regard to smells; the four limbs with regards to rest; these [desires¹²⁹] are all nature [*xìng*], yet there is something ordained in it, and a man of worth would never call them [simply?] ‘nature’. Humaneness with regard to father and son; rightness with regard to ruler and minister; ritual propriety with regard to guests and hosts; wisdom with regards to the worthy¹³⁰; the sage with regard to the Way of heaven; these things are ordained, yet there is something of the nature [*xìng*] in it, and a man of worth would never call them [simply?] ordained.

It is indeed difficult to feel excessively confident about interpreting this passage, but we may again start approximating the overall sense by means of Zhao Qi so as to have a background for understanding Zhu’s reading; the desires of the body are indeed ‘natural propensities’ (*xìng*), but whether one achieves satisfaction of them is not something it is entirely within one’s power to decide, whether this happens or not ‘ordained’ (*mìng*). Conversely, whether

¹²⁷ Cf. ZZYL *juan* 61, p. 1462: ‘區兄問「有性焉，有命焉」一段。先生甚喜，以謂「某四十歲，方看透此段意思」‘Ouxiong asked about the ‘There is nature in it, there is something ordained in it’-passage. The gentleman was most pleased, so much so as to say ‘I was forty years old before I understood the meaning of this passage[...].’

¹²⁸ SSJZ, p. 377

¹²⁹ Or so Zhu, Cheng Yi and Zhao Qi all agree, anyway.

¹³⁰ Zhu considers amending the nominaliser 者 to 否, giving instead the reading ‘with regard to the wise and stupid’

one actually ends up carrying out ‘humanity’ (*ren*) in the father-son relationship, ‘rightness’ (*yi*) in the minister-ruler relationship and so forth is to some extent out of one’s hands; one’s father may die when one is very young, one may live in a ruler-less state, and so it is ‘ordained’ (*mìng*) whether one gets to do these things or not; nonetheless, one has ‘natural propensities’ (*xìng*) towards acting in accordance with these virtues in these relationships, and these can and should be cultivated; after all, one’s luck may change¹³¹.

In his commentary on the *Mencius*, Zhu pursues a similar line of interpretation, but complicates things somewhat in ways that we will need to understand. For the first part of the *Mencius* saying, Zhu quotes Cheng Yi and supplies some thoughts of his own:

程子曰：「五者之欲，性也。然有分，不能皆如其願，則是命也。不可謂我性之所有，而求必得之也。」愚按：不能皆如其願，不止為貧賤。蓋雖富貴之極，亦有品節限制，則是亦有命也。¹³²

Master Cheng said: ‘The desires of these five belong to one’s nature [*xìng*]. Nonetheless one has what is allotted [*fen*]; if one cannot get everything according to one’s wishes, this is ordained [*mìng*]. One cannot say that what one’s nature [*xìng*] contains will necessarily be achieved if one seeks it.’ I [Zhu] stupidly add: That one cannot get everything according to one’s wishes does not only apply to the poor and lowly. For even the richest and highest, if they are held back by their integrity, that too would be ordained [*mìng*].

Cheng Yi’s commentary seems plain enough; one has desires relating to various parts of the body, when and whether they are fulfilled is ‘ordained’ (*mìng*). This captures some of the sense in which I take the word to be used in the term ‘normative constitution’ (*xìngmìng*); as something that either supports or counteracts one’s ability to ‘live out’ one’s ‘nature’ (*xìng*). Zhu’s addition I find somewhat peculiar; from looking at several records in the ZZYL related to this *Mencius* passage, it seems that Zhu was worried that people would get it in their heads that because one’s ability to do what one wants is constrained by economic and social conditions, those who are rich and of high status can simply do what they want, something it would be surprising if either Zhu or Mencius thought. As I read his addition to Cheng’s interpretation, he is saying that the rich and those of high status should be constrained by their character, and the presence or absence of this is as ‘ordained’ (*mìng*) as the presence or absence of riches. The sense ascribed to the term ‘what is ordained’ (*mìng*) here seems to differ quite substantively from that we saw above, where it was taken to refer to an engendering of moral direction by ‘Heaven’ (*tian*) through ‘*yin*, *yang* and the five agents and

¹³¹ Cf Zhao Qi, *juan* 14A, p. 20

¹³² SSJZ, pp.377-378

by completing their form [*xíng*] through *pneuma* [*qì*]’ which in the final instance made everything and everyone inclined to work in concert.

Let us first see how Zhu deals with the second part of the quotation from the *Mencius* before we raise the question of what is going on with the different varieties of ‘what is ordained’ (*mìng*) too forcefully:

程子曰：「仁義禮智天道，在人則賦於命者，所稟有厚薄清濁，然而性善可學而盡，故不謂之命也。」[.]愚按：所稟者厚而清，則其仁之於父子也至，義之於君臣也盡，禮之於賓主也恭，智之於賢否也哲，聖人之於天道也，無不吻合而純亦不已焉。薄而濁，則反是，是皆所謂命也。¹³³

Master Cheng said: ‘Humaneness [*rén*], rightness [*yì*], ritual [*lǐ*], wisdom [*zhì*] and the Way of Heaven [*tiāndào*], so far as they are in people, they are given by ordainment, what is endowed may be thick and thin; pure or muddy, but nonetheless the goodness of one’s nature maybe learnt and exhausted, so one cannot call these things ordained.’ [..] I [Zhu] stupidly add: If one’s endowment is thick and pure, then one’s humaneness [*rén*] with regard to [the relationship of] father and son will be complete; one’s rightness [*yì*] with regard to [the relationship of] ruler and minister will be exhaustive; one’s ritual propriety [*lǐ*] with regard to [the relationship of] guest and host will be reverent; one’s wisdom [*zhì*] with regard to those capable and not will be sagacious; the sage with regard to the Way of Heaven will for ever be united and pure. If the endowment is thin and muddy it will be the opposite of this, these are all what is called ‘ordained’ [*mìng*]

It is tempting to say that Zhu here says that one’s ‘nature’ [*xìng*] may be limited in a fashion similar to the one I described, but not by complex interactions with the world, but simply by what kind of, presumably, ‘*pneuma*’ (*qì*) one is endowed with. ‘*Pneuma*’ (*qì*) however is not a term we should be too hasty with assimilating with any common-sense notion of ‘matter’. As we shall see, what Zhu is interested in here is intimately connected with what sort of things happen to one. As we noted when discussing *The Mean*, there is a duality of sorts in Zhu’s use of the term ‘what is ordained’ (*mìng*): on the one hand, what is given one is one’s ‘nature’ (*xìng*) or predisposition to respond morally and thereby to flourish, on the other hand, this is given one through one’s endowment of ‘*pneuma*’ (*qì*). This endowment has other consequences than whether one is hard of hearing or not (As we saw when discussing the ‘physical constitution’ (*xíngqì*)), it also influences what happens to one in life:

『命也，有性焉』，此『命』字專指氣而言，此『性』字卻指理而言。[...]大凡清濁厚薄之稟，皆命也。所造之有淺有深，所遇之有應有不應，皆由厚薄清濁

¹³³ Ibid. p.378

之分不同。[...]『仁之於父子』，如舜之遇瞽瞍；『義之於君臣』，如文王在羑里，孔子不得位[...]。¹³⁴

‘These things are ordained [*mìng*], but there is nature [*xìng*] in it’: this ‘ordained’ [*mìng*] refers exclusively to *pneuma* [*qì*]; ‘nature’ [*xìng*] here refers to pattern [*lǐ*]. [...] Broadly speaking, pure, muddy, thick or thin endowments all come from ordainment [*mìng*]. The shallowness or depth of what is produced, whether what one meets with responds or not, both of these differ according to thickness, thinness, purity or muddiness. [...] ‘Humaneness with regard to [the relationship of] father and son’, like Shun encountering [his father] Gu Sou¹³⁵; ‘Rightness with regard to [the relationship of] ruler and minister’ this is like king Wen [being imprisoned] at Guli¹³⁶ and Confucius not achieving his position[...]¹³⁷

Here we see a whole range of complex interactions with the world determined by one’s endowment by ‘ordainment’ (*mìng*) of ‘*pneuma*’ (*qì*); both the degree to which one is able to realise, from one’s own depths one’s ‘nature’ (*xìng*) (Cf. ‘The depth and shallowness of what is produced’), and how conducive the activities and relationships one finds oneself in are to realising one’s ‘nature’ (*xìng*) (Cf. ‘Whether what one meets with responds or not’). The three examples are all figures it would be foolish to compare oneself with; they are sages.

Nonetheless, they are sages who faced difficulty for reasons not of their own doing and these difficulties influenced the ways in which they managed act out their virtue; Shun’s troubled family life led to him being a paragon of ‘filial piety’ (*xiao*); king Wen did not live in an age with an enlightened ruler, and so was imprisoned merely for being virtuous; on the other hand, he also lived in a time in which the people were ready for a change of ruling house, so his bad luck was short-lived. Confucius, the very paragon of virtue himself, however, lived in such a rotten time that he did not even achieve a position appropriate to someone of his stature; nonetheless, he did end up being a model for all the ages.

It is in this latter sense that I think we may take the ‘what is ordained’ (*mìng*) in the term ‘normative constitution’ (*xìngmìng*), and this suggests a picture like that I described at the beginning of this chapter, namely that the terms ‘physical constitution’ (*xíngqì*) and

¹³⁴ ZZYL, *juan* 60, p. 1463.1464

¹³⁵ The story of the troubled relationship of Shun and his family is the centrepiece of several passages in the *Mencius*, perhaps most famously *Mencius* 5A.2, where the schemes of Shun’s family to kill him are described. Of relevance to the present text is *Mencius* 4A.28, where Shun’s ‘filial piety’ (*xiao*) is said to have been so profound as to not only move his father; it also established the norms of ‘filial piety’ (*xiao*) for the whole world.

¹³⁶ The future king Wen’s being imprisoned by the tyrant Zhou for displaying his displeasure at the barbarous acts of the tyrant is described in *Shiji* chapter 3, section 31

¹³⁷ As we mentioned in the last chapter, Confucius’ not having in his lifetime an appropriate position was one of the hot topics of the time, Zhu’s solution was to suggest that, at least when it came to what was ‘ordained’ [*mìng*] for him, Confucius was not entirely perfect.

‘normative constitution’ (*xìngmìng*) denote the variety of factors, both physical and moral, internal and external, that determine the ways in which one at any given moment is able to respond.

3.3 The Unity of the Mind

The picture, however, needs to be messier still; for while I think some intuitive sense can be made of the notion of physical responses determined in their concrete expression by the state of one’s ‘*pneuma*’ (*qì*), it is not at all obvious that one has intuitions about what a ‘natural’ (*xìng*) response determined by ‘what is ordained’ (*mìng*) is. One reason for that (quite apart from any potential distance between our concepts of what ‘human nature’ is and what Zhu means by ‘nature’ (*xìng*), is that on the picture Zhu is developing in these texts, there is no difference. As we will recall, the mind is one, whatever it gets up to¹³⁸, and ‘the mind of the Way’ uses ‘the mind of man’ to express itself¹³⁹. In light of this and our intervening discussions, let us return to the two fascinating lines of argument we started from:

如其達性命之理，則雖人心之用，而無非道心，孟子所以指形色為天性者以此。若不明踐形之義，則與告子『食、色』之言又何以異？¹⁴⁰

‘If one understands the pattern [*lǐ*] of one’s normative constitution [*xìngmìng*], then even if it is the mind of man that manifests, it would still be nothing but the mind of the Way; the reason Mencius points to form and appearance as being heavenly nature is just this. If one does not understand the meaning of ‘realising one’s form’ [*jiàn xíng*], how would this be any different from what Gaozi says about ‘eating and looks?’

And

若只守道心，而欲屏去人心，則是判性命為二物，而所謂道心者，空虛無有，將流於釋老之學，而非虞書之所指者。¹⁴¹

If one merely keeps the mind of the Way and wishes to separate off the mind of man, then that would be to divide up nature [*xìng*] and what is ordained [*mìng*] as two things, and what one would then be calling ‘the mind of the Way’, would be empty and non-existent, it would flow off into the teachings of the Buddhists and Daoists, and it wouldn’t be what the book of Yu points to.

¹³⁸ ‘心之虛靈知覺，一而已矣’ ‘The mind, whether empty and alert or aware [in stillness and in outer-centred activity], is simply one’ as the *Preface* tells us.

¹³⁹ ‘[...]道心卻雜出於人心之間’ ‘[...]the mind of the Way emerges intermixed within the mind of man’ This is what Xie 2009, p.106-107 calls ‘the doctrine of peering through the mind of man’ 人心通孔說

¹⁴⁰ ZZYL, *juan* 60, p. 1488

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

As we noted when last we saw them, these two sayings are arguing the same case, namely that it is silly to want to be rid of one's 'mind of man'. It would be silly, because what Zhu takes the word to denote are simply one's bodily responses to the world, and these one cannot be without. In these quoted passages, he takes it a step further; one *wouldn't want* to be without them. In the first passage, what one wouldn't want to be without is the simple practical ability to realise 'the mind of the Way'-responses, although this does put an obligation on one to 'realise one's form' (*jiàn xíng*). In the second passage, with its curious *reductio*, it is a similar point, I think, but with a very different emphasis; to want to get rid of 'the mind of man' would amount to wanting to sever off one's 'nature' (*xìng*) from its concrete realisation in the course of a physically situated life (*mìng*)¹⁴².

3.4 Concluding remarks

In this chapter, we have attempted to make sense of the interpretive framework that Zhu employs in interpreting the 'mind transmission'. We have done this by advancing several interpretive hypotheses motivated by the text of our ZZYL-record and by finding support for these:

1. Zhu is operating with a responsive model of the mind and 'awareness' (*zhījué*) are responses.
2. When Zhu sets out to explain how the mind, more profoundly works, he describes the sorts of things that will have an effect on the nature of one's responses, these are our 'physical constitution' (*xíngqì*) and our 'normative constitution' (*xìngmìng*).
3. These are dynamic as opposed to static concepts; the composition, so to speak, of one's 'physical constitution' (*xíngqì*) and 'normative constitution' (*xìngmìng*) is subject to change.

Having here made a case for ascribing responsive model of the mind to Zhu, and proposed an interpretation of how these responses work, we will in the next chapter bring this elaborate tale into dialogue with the text of the 'mind transmission' in order to make the picture of moral action Zhu paints in these texts clear.

¹⁴² In the sense of 'a life lived', including all the things that befall one of good and ill.

4 Awareness and the Two Minds

In the previous chapter, we endeavoured to go deeper into Zhu's interpretation of the 'mind transmission', focusing on two points:

The model of mind involved and what that might tell us, and
What Zhu's terms for the 'two origins' might tell us about what 'emerges' from them

To guide these explorations, we made two hypotheses:

1. That the model of mind involved is 'responsive', i.e. that Zhu in these texts treats the mind as a sort of thing that not only 'takes in' the outside world, but in the very act of 'taking it in' also does something.
2. That the terms for the 'two origins' are used to express what we called dynamic rather than static concepts.

We further proposed that these dynamic concepts express on the one hand, the possibilities entailed by one's innate tendency towards ideal physical and normative functioning, and on the other, the limitations entailed by one's endowment of 'pneuma' (*qi*) and of one's 'place in the world' (a somewhat strained rendering of *mìng*). That is, that they are descriptions of the sort of things that influence how one at any given time responds.

In this chapter, we will draw out the consequences the above reading has for the ethical story Zhu tells in his interpretations of the 'mind transmission'. In the literature, this story has typically been read as a paean to the joys of self-restraint¹⁴³; what we will argue is almost precisely the opposite. We will see Zhu as taking a problematic passive state as the one that humans naturally find themselves in and we will see him propose a way out of this predicament, into mature agent-hood.

The way in which we will do this is by focusing on a term that is load-bearing in the stories told in the *Preface*, the letters and our ZZYL-record, namely 'awareness' (*zhījué*). In the previous chapter, we focused on that term and Zhu's other terminologies 'in isolation' so to speak; in this chapter we will see how this terminology of Zhu's goes into dialogue with the text of the 'mind transmission'. That is to say, we want to know what someone who doesn't even think that there are such things as a 'mind of man' and a 'mind of the Way' makes of the claim that they are respectively 'perilous' (*wēi*) 危 and 'subtle' (*wēi*) 微; and

¹⁴³ E.g. in Chen 2000 p. 231 and Meng 1989, p. 289, with Meng going so far as to say that the thoughts we will be discussing amount to espousing subjugation of the individual, leading to a completely passive psychology and considerable harm.

what does such a man think that it means to ‘rarefy’ (*jīng*) 精 and ‘unify’ (*yī*) 一 things which he doesn’t think are real? If we are to do this, however, we need first to achieve some clarity in what ‘awareness’ (*zhījué*) is and isn’t. With a view to achieving this clarity, I will first rehearse how Zhu formulates what he thinks is ‘really going on’ with ‘the two minds’; then rehearse what the previous chapter suggested for us about the term ‘awareness’ (*zhījué*) and then engage the work of some scholars who have had opinions on Zhu’s usage of the term. The upshot of this discussion will be a thicker conception of ‘awareness’ (*zhījué*) as response, after all, there are all sorts of things that can be meant by ‘mental response’. Even ‘mental response emerging out of one’s physical or normative constitution’ is not an English sentence the sense of which is immediately clear. This is to say that our conception of what Zhu is saying when he uses this term can stand some elaboration. The upshot of this discussion will be to make the connection between ‘awareness’ (*zhījué*) and action more evident, thus seeing more clearly why these things mattered to Zhu. After this discussion we will attempt to piece together the picture cultivation and action that Zhu builds around the ‘mind transmission’.

4.1 What Does ‘Awareness’ Mean?

In our texts there are two main formulations of what is really at issue when the ‘mind transmission’ speaks of ‘two minds’; the first is found in the first words of *Letter 10 to Zheng Kexue* where Zhu first quotes something Zheng has said and corrects him:

‘此心之靈即道心也；道心苟存而此心虛，則無所不知而豈只知此數者而止焉！’
此心之靈，其覺於理者，道心也；其覺於欲者，人心也。¹⁴⁴

‘The numinous of this mind *is* the mind of the Way; if the mind of the Way is preserved and this mind is empty, then there is *nothing* one wouldn’t know, and not just these few things!’ The numinous of this mind, when it is aware [*jué*] from [on the basis of] pattern [*li*] is the mind of the Way; when it is [*jué*] from [on the basis of] desire, it is the mind of man.

This formulation is entirely free of the heavy-handed metaphysics we spent the last chapter interpreting and I think this amounts to a subtly different point made, a difference we will spend much of the latter half of this chapter attending to, but which I will say some things about before the end of this section.

¹⁴⁴ ZZWJ, *juan* 56, p.2713, *Letter 10 to Zheng Zishang*. These words of Zhu’s are also repeated verbatim in *Letter 11* and in the ZZYL-record.

For the time being, we may note the pedagogical problems Zhu faced with his decidedly revisionist reading of the ‘mind transmission’: His students not only do not catch that he doesn’t think there are two minds; they also want one of them to be more real or essential than the other! Zhu’s authoritative statement on this is of course found in the *Preface*, where this talk of pattern (*lǐ*) and desire (*yù*) is absent:

心之虛靈知覺，一而已矣，而以為有人心、道心之異者，則以其或生於形氣之私，或原於性命之正，而所以為知覺者不同。¹⁴⁵

In being empty, numinous and aware, the mind is simply one, and the distinction between the mind of man and the mind of the Way is because some awareness is born from the self-centredness of one’s physical constitution and some awareness is borne of the correctness of one’s normative constitution, so that by which they are awareness is not the same.

That Zhu has these two ways putting seemingly the same point has not escaped the attention of those who have had something to say about ‘the distinction between the two minds’ (*renxin daoxi zhi fen*) 人心道心之分, with one interpretation being that the former expression describes the objects of ‘perception’ (*zhījué*), the latter the origin of ‘perception’ (*zhījué*)¹⁴⁶, this I think is mistaken. Meng Peiyuan, I think is here closer to the mark, when he says that the former expression is ‘spoken from the perspective of the epistemic functioning of the consciousness of the subject’¹⁴⁷ and the latter, again, in terms of origins. Now, I do not think there is any ‘epistemic functioning’ in the sense I suspect Meng means it, but I think he is on to something; it seems to me, that when Zhu says ‘to be aware (*zhījué*) from (on the basis of)’ either this or that, he is speaking from ‘inside the action’, so to speak; whereas the expression from the *Preface* places the ‘awareness’ (*zhījué*) within the sort of grand context we saw in the previous chapter. The details of this we will return to.

Some readers may object to the straightforward identification here of *jue* 覺 *simpliciter* and the complex phrase *zhījué* 知覺. The fact that the statements are parallel to the degree they are is perhaps reason enough to justify taking them as two sides of a coin, but perhaps something of interest hides behind the different terms? I do not think so, however; using the terms more or less interchangeably seems to have been a linguistic habit of Zhu’s¹⁴⁸.

¹⁴⁵ SSJZ, p. 14

¹⁴⁶ E.g. Chen 2000, pp. 226-227

¹⁴⁷ 從主體意識的認知作用上說. Meng 1989, p.283

¹⁴⁸ As can perhaps most clearly be seen in this ZZYL-record: ‘「遺書中取醫家言仁。又一段云：『醫家以不識痛癢為不仁。』又以不知覺、不認義理為不仁，又卻從知覺上說。」曰：「覺是覺於理。」’ ZZYL,

My sense is that *jue simpliciter* was his preference for verbal uses and *zhījué* his preference for nominal uses, but this is far from universally the case. Furthermore, *jue simpliciter* is used for several completely garden-variety verbs, such as ‘to realise’ and ‘to wake up’, whereas the compound seems more explicitly technical.

So much for Zhu’s linguistic habits, we now want to know what the technical term means. The previous chapter suggested the following features:

1. It is a response to an external thing or event on the *gǎnyìng*-model of causation;
2. It has ‘affective’ qualities¹⁴⁹
3. Depending on its origin (the ‘normative constitution’ (*xìngmìng*) or the ‘physical constitution’ (*xíngqì*)), it is determined in type (physical or normative) and concrete expression (depending on the state of one’s body, as determined by the quality of one’s *pneuma* (*qì*) or on the kind of situations one finds oneself in, determined by ‘what is ordained’ (*mìng*) for one)

As we hinted at in the introduction, the term has typically not been taken to have these qualities (With the exception of typically being divided into physical and normative categories); in fact, it has been taken to be a term that has been tremendously important in European post-Cartesian philosophy, namely ‘perception’¹⁵⁰. What is at issue here is not a translation, of course; most scholars who espouse this reading are Chinese¹⁵¹. The problem is the ascription of a philosophical psychology from sixteenth and seventeenth century Europe to a twelfth century Chinese thinker without much argument. This enters into our discussion in the reading of our quotation from *Letter 10*, where Zhu describes talk of ‘two minds’ as *really* talk of

此心之靈，其覺於理者，道心也；其覺於欲者，人心也。¹⁵²

juan 33, p. 851. ‘Someone asked: ‘In the Testament [of the Cheng Brothers] the saying of medical specialists are used to speak of humaneness [*rén*]. There’s a passage that goes ‘The medical specialists treat not feeling pain and itches as not being [*ren*]’ this also treats not being aware [*zhījué*], not recognising normative patterns [*yǐlǐ*] as not being [*rén*], this is also explaining it through awareness [*zhījué*].’ He [Zhu Xi] said: ‘‘Be aware’ [*jué*] [here] means ‘to be aware from pattern [*jué yú lǐ*]’ This record is a leftover from a debate we unfortunately cannot go into, namely Zhu’s disagreement with Xie Liangzuo 謝良佐 over whether explaining ‘humaneness’ (*rén*) in terms of ‘awareness’ (*jué*) was an acceptable thing to do. This is discussed in Yang, 2010, pp. 277-283.

¹⁴⁹ These two points are inferred from our discussion Zhu’s use of the *Record of Music*; in Zhu’s comments on which he glossed ‘the desires of the nature’ (*xìng zhī yù*) as ‘emotions’ (*qǐng*). It should of course be said that *qing* are perhaps not best characterised as ‘affective’.

¹⁵⁰ The key notions in this model being ‘impressions on the soul’ and ‘representation’.

¹⁵¹ And in modern academic Chinese *zhījué* 知覺 is one of the options in translating the philosophical term of art ‘perception’. Conversely, Angle 2010 pp. 113-131, in discussing a similar subject to the one we are in Wang Yangming uses the word ‘moral perception’, but specifies what he ascribes to Wang in such a way that it is clear that the intellectual world is not a post-Cartesian one.

¹⁵² ZZWJ, *juan* 56, p.2713

The numinous of this mind, when it is aware [*jue*] from [on the basis of] pattern [*li*] is the mind of the Way; when it is aware [*jue*] from [on the basis of] desire, it is the mind of man

Here we have read the coverb *yú* 於 as ablative; but it is of course a viable option, in principle, to read it as an object-marker. If one does this and adds the premise that Zhu thinks everything in the world has a ‘pattern’ (*li*), and if one understands ‘pattern’ (*li*) as being in some ways similar to the inferentially articulated Ideas of post-Cartesian¹⁵³ thought, it is not such a stretch of the imagination to think that one is dealing with an activity somewhat like ‘perception’ on the post-Cartesian model. This reading runs into the danger of nonsense in the next part of the sentence, however; for if Zhu genuinely believes that what it takes for one to have a ‘mind of man’ is that one ‘perceives’ or ‘is aware of’ desires (*yù*), then it is very difficult to see where the peril (*wēi*) lies¹⁵⁴. Despite this danger of nonsense, readings of the above passage and others like it seem fairly widespread and it may be of value to consider how these are justified.

Chen Lai and Zhang Liwen on *zhījué*

A great many texts on Zhu either simply translate the term as ‘perception’¹⁵⁵ without raising the issue or, in the case of Chinese writers, simply use the term in such a way that one suspects they might possibly have taken it in the way described above¹⁵⁶. This is to say that the term is not often problematized and that it would be difficult to find a position sufficiently clearly elaborated to discuss by any of the mentioned authors. The exceptions to this are two scholars who have come to very similar conclusions by studying different materials in different ways, namely Zhang Liwen, in his *A Critical Biography of Zhu Xi* 朱子評傳, and Chen Lai, in his *Researches in Master Zhu’s Philosophy* 朱子哲學研究.

¹⁵³ Thus e.g. Ching 2000, p.30: ‘Speaking generally, the protagonists of Li (理) presume a preestablished pattern of harmony in the universe and in human nature, with the one Li and its myriad manifestations resembling, in some ways, a Leibnizian network of monads with God as supreme Monad through which and through whom all the others communicate. This harmony is to be recaptured and maintained by a proper balance of reason and the emotions, of moral striving sustained by intellectual pursuit.’

¹⁵⁴ The following ZZYL-record seems more in line with what one would expect in that case: ‘大率克己工夫，是自著力做底事，與他人殊不相干。緊緊閉門，自就身上子細體認，覺得才有私意，便克去’ ZZYL, *juan* 41, p. 104 ‘Broadly speaking, the work of restraining oneself is something one does by one’s own strength, it has no particular connection with others. Firmly close your door, carefully examine your own person, and as soon as you become aware [*jue de*] of any selfish intentions, you go right ahead restraining!’ Here ‘becoming aware of selfish intentions’ is a necessary precondition for doing something about them, surely the same would hold for undesirable desires.

¹⁵⁵ E.g. Elman 1983, p.19

¹⁵⁶ E.g. Lao 2015, Vol. 3. p.227 and Meng 1989, p. 287

What we will see in these two writers is a difficult negotiation of, so it seems anyway, on the one hand the realisation that we are probably not dealing with the sort of notion that a modern Chinese philosopher speaks of when he speaks of ‘perception’ (also *zhījué*), and the hope that maybe he nonetheless is. We will begin with Chen, who has no less than two separate discussions of the notion of ‘awareness’ (*zhījué*), one on its own, another as concerns the ‘two minds’. As the former provides the basis of the latter, that is the direction in which we will consider his view.

Chen begins his exposition by identifying two types of uses of the word *zhījué* 知覺, or in his words ‘two meanings’ of the word, one which he calls narrow and one broad. In the narrow sense, it simply refers to the ability of the mind to *zhījué* (At this point in his exposition he has not given any definite sense to the word apart from being ‘like the ears and eyes seeing and hearing’¹⁵⁷). In its broader sense, Chen says, the word denotes perception and all kinds of intellectual and psychological activities¹⁵⁸. As Chen’s exposition goes on, he elaborates this broad sense further by saying that in relation to *zhījué*, Zhu employed the Buddhist distinction between ‘what can V’ *néng* 能 and ‘V-ed’ *suǒ* 所, and says that these terms are used to distinguish the subject of knowing and objective object of knowledge¹⁵⁹. There are two problems with what Chen is saying here are, first, that he provides no evidence for his claims, and second that there really isn’t that much evidence to quote; there are a total of six instances of the phrase ‘所知覺’ ‘what one is aware of’ in the ZZYL, of which four are uses of ‘there is/is no V’ 有/無所+V-constructions where the more likely interpretation is ‘unawares’; and the phrase simply doesn’t occur in the *Collected writings*, so to the degree that Zhu used this distinction, it was not habitual use.

Chen says that in addition to the perceiving subject, the things in the world ‘perceived’ (From his exposition it seems very clear that this is the sense he takes *zhījué*), there is another part: the concepts and other contentful thoughts, such as ideas, produced by epistemic processes, and it is this that Zhu ‘often’ means by ‘所知覺’ ‘what one is aware of’¹⁶⁰, that is at most in two places. Of these two, one is a short utterance that is gnomic in the extreme and difficult to confidently place in the context of anything else Zhu says, the other may offer

¹⁵⁷ Chen 2000, p. 213

¹⁵⁸ 作為思維活動，既包括感覺，也包括思維，人的心理活動統被視為‘知覺’(ibid.)

¹⁵⁹ 中國哲學後來吸收了佛教‘能’‘所’相對範疇，用以區別認識的主體與認識的客體對象 (ibid.)

¹⁶⁰ Ibid. p. 214

some support to Chen's reading, and as it concerns the 'mind transmission' we may quote and attempt to make sense of the relevant parts:

人只有一箇心，但知覺得道理底是道心，知覺得聲色臭味底是人心[...] 非有兩箇心。道心、人心，本只是一箇物事，但所知覺不同。¹⁶¹
Men have only one mind, it is simply that being able to be aware of patterns of the Way [*zhījué dé dào li dì*] it is the mind of the Way, and being able to be aware of sounds, sights, smells and tastes [*zhījué dé shēng sè xiù wèi dì*] it is the mind of man. [...] It isn't as if there are two minds. The mind of the Way and the mind of man are basically one thing, but what one is aware of is not the same (*suǒ zhījué bù tóng*).⁷

As Chen doesn't give or discuss any examples, it is difficult to feel secure about what he means, but the above quoted passage is the only thing in the ZZYL that seems like it could be interpreted in light of what he says. What would it mean to read the above passage in light of what Chen says? Does it mean that the 'patterns of the Way' (*dào li*) and 'sounds, sights, smells and tastes' (*shēng sè xiù wèi*) are produced in the mind? This is of course a legitimate philosophical position to have on so-called 'secondary qualities', but it is one rarely seen made explicit in pre-modern China. Part of what was left out above also suggests that there is something other than the philosophy of perception going on

[...]人心不全是不好，若人心是全不好底，不應只下箇「危」字。蓋為人心易得走從惡處去，所以下箇「危」字。¹⁶²
The mind of man isn't completely bad, if it was, one wouldn't just say 'perilous'. I suppose since the mind of man easily ends up running off from a bad place, he said 'perilous'.

It is an interesting record, but the grammar is unusual compared with other things Zhu has to say about the two minds so it is difficult to know if precisely how one should interpret it. If concept-formation is what is being discussed here, it is of a peculiar kind indeed. Not least because the text seems plainly obvious that Zhu is just speaking seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and smelling. The above quotation *does* suggest something like the following state of affairs, where concept-formation is not at issue:

人心是知覺，口之於味，目之於色，耳之於聲底，未是不好，只是危。若便說做人欲，則屬惡了，何用說危？道心是知覺義理底。¹⁶³

¹⁶¹ ZZYL, *juan* 78, p. 2010

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ ZZYL, *juan* 78, p. 2013

The mind of man is awareness; the mouth with regard to tastes, the eyes with regard to looks, the ears with regard to sounds; it isn't *bad*, it's just perilous. If one were to explain it as human desires [*rén yù*], then it would belong under bad, why would one call it perilous? The mind of the Way is aware of moral patterns.

The quotation from *Mencius* 7B.24, known to us from the previous chapter, suggests a solution; for there it is certainly not a question of concept-formation, but desires. The picture suggested is this: 'what one is aware of' (*suǒ zhījué*) is something in the world that exerts some sort of pull on the mind and calls forth responses. That is, if we use this record as a key to reading the curious record above. It would be a stretch to say that this is what Chen's take on the term suggests, but in light of our considered view of 'awareness' (*zhījué*) from the previous chapter and in light of the last quoted ZZYL-records, it seems to be the preferred reading

What this suggests for our reading going forward is this: That the situations and things one responds to have, to somewhat strain the musical metaphor of the *gǎnyìng*-model, both desiderative and moral 'timbres' and the nature of one's response is determined by which one 'resonates' with.

When Chen, later in the book, returns to the topic of 'awareness' (*zhījué*), in connection with his discussion of 'the two minds', he quotes precisely these two places and the statement from *Letter 10* that it is our aim to say something about. He there claims that what distinguishes the 'two minds' is the 'content' (*nèiróng* 內容) of 'awareness' (*zhījué*), that 'the mind of the Way' is the 'moral consciousness' of the mind, and that the 'mind of man' is responsible for perceptual and desiderative states.¹⁶⁴ What he then means by 'content' cannot be the same as he meant before, or that would at least be a peculiar way of using the term 'moral consciousness', for that usually means the ability to distinguish the relevant moral factors in a situation, rather than the ability to learn the use of moral concepts, although it does presuppose such an ability. On the phrase from *Letter 10*¹⁶⁵ that we suggested would give a reading such as Chen's problems, he is peculiarly silent about the even the possibility of a problem.

To sum up, Chen seems overly preoccupied with making Zhu talk about the sort of things that European philosophers care about, such as concept-formation, to see that several

¹⁶⁴ Chen 2000, p. 226-227

¹⁶⁵ I.e. '[...] 其覺於欲者，人心也' '[...]when it is aware [jue] from [on the basis of] desire, it is the mind of man.'

of his own readings point in another direction entirely. Something similar happens in the Zhang Liwen's book to which we now turn.

Zhang Liwen, in his sub-chapter on 'awareness' (*zhījué*) in his *Critical Biography of Master Zhu*, does not attempt to interpret the passages using the term that pertain the 'two minds', like Chen, he reads Zhu's thoughts on these matters as 'free-standing' philosophising. He too takes there to be a rough division in uses of the word by Zhu, between a faculty of the mind and concrete instances of the use of this faculty.¹⁶⁶ When he speaks of the faculty, he takes it as the ability to perceive, and in support of this he quotes from a ZZYL-record I wish to dwell on for a moment. The record discusses a passage in the *Mencius* in light of some sayings by Zhang Zai, Shao Yong and Zhou Dunyi, and at the end of it a student asks about 'awareness' (*zhījué*) and is given a long reply:

「人與鳥獸固有知覺，但知覺有通塞，草木亦有知覺否？」曰：「亦有。如一盆花，得些水澆灌，便敷榮；若摧抑他，便枯悴。謂之無知覺，可乎？周茂叔窗前草不除去，云『與自家意思一般』，便是有知覺。只是鳥獸底知覺不如人底，草木底知覺又不如鳥獸底。又如大黃喫著便會瀉，附子喫著便會熱。只是他知覺只從這一路去。」又問：「腐敗之物亦有否？」曰：「亦有。如火燒成灰，將來泡湯喫，也馱苦。」¹⁶⁷

'Men, birds and beasts most certainly have awareness [*zhījué*], but [their] awareness [*zhījué*] [differs in being] penetrating or obstructed, do plants also have awareness [*zhījué*]?' [Zhu Xi] said: 'They too do. Take a pot of flowers, if they have some water poured on them, they will bloom; if you break or press them, they will wither and dry. Can one say that they are without awareness [*zhījué*]?' Zhou [Dunyi] didn't remove the grass growing in front of his window and said 'Their thoughts are like my own', which is to say that they have awareness [*zhījué*]. It's just that the awareness [*zhījué*] of birds and beasts isn't as good as that of men, and that of plants isn't as good as that of birds and beasts. It's as with rhubarb root, if you eat it, you will get loose bowels, and monkshood, if you eat it, you will be hot. It's just that its awareness [*zhījué*] only follows this road.' [The student] further asked: 'What about rotten things, do they to have it?' [Zhu Xi] said: 'They do. If you burn something into ash, and boil a soup on it and eat it, it will carry bitterness.'

My reason for wanting to go into this, is that I take it that there is here some support for the overall interpretations I am proposing, namely that 'awareness' (*zhījué*) is, first and foremost, responding to the outside world and responding by doing something at that. Zhang Liwen would at this stage disagree, for as he reads this, Zhu is speaking of the ability to sense one's surroundings. Following this assumption, he grants to Zhu that indeed animals share with men

¹⁶⁶ Zhang 2008, p. 214

¹⁶⁷ Quoted from *ibid.*, pp. 214-215

the ability to see and hear, and as to plants, their degree of consciousness is something we will have to await the final word from the biologists on, and as far as ash (He does not discuss the sentence about rhubarb root and monkshood) goes, Zhu is confused, its bitter taste is a result of physical processes and the human sense of taste; ashes, after all, like stones are unable to transmit perceptual information¹⁶⁸.

Zhang's interpretation seems to me uncharitable in the extreme; Zhu seems very adamant that the ability to effect either physical results or taste upon ingestion *is* what these plants' and ashes' 'awareness' (*zhījué*). Their 'awareness' (*zhījué*) is limited, compared to birds, beasts and men, in that the ways in which they are able to react to different situations is limited; rhubarb root gives diarrhoea both to the humane and the inhumane. As we have already seen some indications of, and as I will flesh out below, I think the ability affect a situation in one way or another is absolutely central to Zhu's notion of 'awareness' (*zhījué*).

When Zhang's exposition goes on to discuss the concrete instances of 'awareness' (*zhījué*), the aspect of it that is 'from within' comes into focus; he quotes and says that Zhu endorsed a statement by Cheng Yi which says that

‘知是知此一事，覺是忽然自理會得’¹⁶⁹

‘To understand is to understand this one matter, to awaken is to suddenly get it of oneself’

He does not mention that Cheng Yi is here interpreting a passage in the *Mencius*¹⁷⁰, a fact that may influence how much weight one wants to assign to this as definition. At any rate Zhang takes it that the use of one's ability to *zhījué* involves getting knowledge that is of a higher order than mere knowledge of facts; it is to get at general laws, to know the workings of the universe, so to speak, that is, to know 'pattern' (*lǐ*). While Zhu is very concerned that one understand 'patterns' (*lǐ*)¹⁷¹, I do not think that his talk of 'awareness' (*zhījué*) is a part of that process. Rather, I think that it is the other way around; that a greater understanding of 'patterns' (*lǐ*) enables one to more competently 'be aware' (*zhījué*); to respond in ways which are just right, and it is to making it explicit how that comes about that we now turn.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid. p.215

¹⁶⁹ Quoted from Zhang 2008, p. 274

¹⁷⁰ Specifically MZ 4A.7, where the Xia 夏-era noble subject Yi Yin 伊尹 describes a maieutic ideal: ‘天之生此民也，使先知覺後知，使先覺覺後覺也 [...] ‘When Heaven gives life to this people, it [Heaven] has those who first to know awaken those who come after, it has those first to awaken awaken those who come later [...]’

¹⁷¹ As his commentary on *The Great Learning* makes abundantly clear.

4.2 Awareness along Different Roads

Before we started discussing the work of these two scholars, we had a certain conception of what ‘awareness’ (*zhījué*) means in our context, it had the following features

1. It is a response to an external thing or event on the *gǎnyìng*-model of causation
2. It has ‘affective’ qualities
3. Depending on its origin (the ‘normative constitution’ (*xìngmìng*) or the ‘physical constitution’ (*xíngqì*)), it is determined in type (physical or normative) and concrete expression (depending on the state of one’s body, as determined by the quality of one’s *pneuma* (*qì*) or on the kind of situations one finds oneself in, determined by ‘what is ordained’ (*mìng*) for one)
4. ‘Awareness’ (*zhījué*) arising from one’s ‘normative constitution’ is in some way dependent on ‘awareness’ (*zhījué*) arising from one’s ‘physical constitution’

To these features we may, in light of our discussion of these two gentlemen, chose to add the following two points:

5. ‘Awareness’ (*zhījué*) is in some sense ‘veridical’; in ‘being aware’ (*zhījué*), ‘what one is aware of’ (*suǒ zhījué*) is something in the world which exerts some pull on one whether it is ‘sights and sounds’ or ‘moral patterns’ (*yìlǐ*)¹⁷²
6. The response may involve action¹⁷³

These two latter points seem to me to be of no small importance, I will now first make that importance explicit and then, in light of these points, set out to see how this term is used interpreting the ‘mind transmission’s’ talk of the ‘danger’, ‘subtlety’, ‘rarefying’ and ‘unifying’.

What I mean by point 5 above is this: whenever one is aware (*zhījué*), there is some genuine aspect of the world that one is responding to, whether one is aware (*zhījué*) from (on the basis of) pattern (*lǐ*) or desire (*yù*). The importance of this is twofold: On the one hand, as concerns the battle against perception waged in this chapter, it makes this concept unlike

¹⁷² At any rate, this is how I chose to accommodate our discussion of ‘what one is aware of’ (*suǒ zhījué*)

¹⁷³ Or so Zhang Liwen’s examples of plants and ash seem to suggest; causing diarrhoea being a particularly graphic kind of ‘active’ ‘awareness’ (*zhījué*).

perception in that one can misperceive/perceive what isn't so (as countless sceptical arguments from illusion make clear), but the same does not appear to be true for 'awareness' (*zhījué*). For something to count as 'awareness' (*zhījué*) it has to be called forth by something in the world.

On the other, there is a historical point to be made here: The case can be made that responsiveness, in one way or another, has been an important subject within Chinese philosophy from its very beginning¹⁷⁴, but the thought that one's moral responses are underwritten by the specific way the world and the situations one finds oneself in are, has not always been the norm. Seligman et al, in discussing the excavated text *Nature emerges from Command* 性自命出, describes a very similar view of the purpose of cultivation, namely to improve one's responses, but the background for this cultivation is a stark contrast to that we are ascribing to Zhu, he says that 'Like many texts from early China, 'Nature Emerges from the Decree' assumes a fractured, discontinuous world. It is up to humans to build patterns of relationships out of this fractured world and thereby create an ordered, ethical way of life.'¹⁷⁵ In Zhu's world, the things mentioned in the final sentence do not require any building, they merely need to be *realised*. This same point we in the previous chapter, but there we discussed it as a metaphysical, not *ethical* point.

Point 6 above is crucial as it suggests that the particular kind of intellectualism that is often ascribed to Zhu and that we've seen ascribed to him in relation to our texts perhaps isn't what they are about at all.

The above is not to deny a strong mental and indeed intellectual component in what is being discussed, but to see that a significant amount of weight is on the practical side of things. What I will now do is to elaborate how I think the above factors figure in our texts and how they tie together with the descriptions of the 'two minds' as being respectively 'perilous' and 'subtle'; and how they are subject to 'rarefication' and 'unification'.

The way I will be going about this is by telling several stories based on things Zhu says in the texts that will illustrate these different points. What we will end up with is a gloss of *zhījué* as 'taking (intellectually, emotionally and practically) a situation to be of a certain kind and acting on so taking it'. What will be special about these 'takings as' will not be an issue of truth or falsehood, but of understanding the *scope* of a situation, so they will be

¹⁷⁴ Hansen 1992, pp. 19-22 makes this argument by way of a quaint analogy. Puett 2004 also indicates the importance attached, from quite early on, to responsiveness.

¹⁷⁵ Seligman et al. 2008, p.32

‘takings as’ that express the present state of one’s understanding of the situation. In this sense we will end up ascribing a fairly strong intellectualism to Zhu, but not the one he is usually saddled with.

Responsiveness and peril

Let us start with the observation that Zhu, throughout our ZZYL-record, scoffs at any suggestion that the ‘mind of man’ is something to be rid of. For this there are several reasons; one is that on Zhu’s reading of the ‘mind transmission’ it doesn’t make sense; one would have to get rid of one’s body! A more profound, but connected, point has to do with what we found in the previous chapter when discussing Zhu’s use of the quote from the *Record of Music*; the way humans come to live and be in the world are deeply tied one’s physical placement in it. In our ZZYL-record, Zhu uses this quote to nail home a line of reasoning about why it would be unwise to want to rid oneself of one’s ‘mind of man’:

人心是此身有知覺，有嗜欲者 [...] ¹⁷⁶

The mind of man is this body’s having awareness [*zhījué*] and preferences [...]

This in itself is of course not wherein the ‘peril’ lies, but it is, Zhu thinks, a part of the reason why a sage such as Shun would say ‘perilous’ rather than straightforwardly bad, which is what he takes the opposition to be saying (And which we saw Cheng Yi saying in chapter 2). One might be worried that Zhu here relates ‘awareness’ (*zhījué*) so specifically with one of the ‘minds’, but as we saw in the last chapter, moral responses take place in the real world too and so can only be expressed through physical responses. So much is true of everyone; the sages are not ghosts ¹⁷⁷, if anything they are more efficacious in the world than the rest of us, this we will return to. So far, we have neither seen ‘peril’ nor any ‘takings as’. Let us begin with the latter (although, it should be said, my full argument concerning this interpretation will emerge gradually). In ‘being aware from [on the basis of] desire’, which is what we have good reason to read references to ‘the mind of man’ as, one is at the very least assuming one sort of evaluative stance; one is taking (treating, regarding) some things as desirable and

¹⁷⁶ ZZYL, *juan* 62, p. 1488

¹⁷⁷ As Makeham 2003, esp. pp. 96-123 shows, it was not a position universally held that sages were, in important ways just like the rest of us. In fact, we find in our texts a forceful expression of one of Zhu’s claims to fame, namely thinking that all men can be sages (Although it is tempting to suspect that the ‘all men’ here also means ‘and only men’)

others as not. This is how one learns to interact with the world, yet if this is the *only* way in which one interacts with the world, even into adulthood, it is harmful:

『性之欲也，感於物而動』， [...] 但為物誘而至於 陷溺，則為害爾。¹⁷⁸
‘It is the desires of one’s nature that are stirred by things and move [...] yet if one becomes enticed by things to the point of drowning among them, then that would cause harm.

This is not the last time we see aquatic imagery used to describe the sort of loss of control that one’s basic responsiveness exposes one to, and it is precisely here that the danger lies; ‘mind of man’-responses are an inescapable part of what makes us human, but expose us to being pulled along by things in directions we might not want to go. In Zhu’s remarks here on the *Record of Music* it is left somewhat vague how this is supposed to work, thankfully Zhu has provided an example:

且以飲食言之，凡饑渴而欲得飲食以充其飽且足者，皆人心也。然必有義理存焉，有可以食，有不可以食。如子路食於孔悝之類，此不可食者。¹⁷⁹
To discuss it in terms of eating: Whenever one is hungry or thirsty and wants to drink and eat so as to get one’s fill, it is the mind of man. However, there is necessarily moral patterns [*yili*] in it; there are [situations where] one can eat, and [situations where] one can’t. Things like Zilu dining with Kong Kui, that is [a situation where] one cannot eat.

The ‘can’ here is very evidently not about prudence in what one puts into one’s mouth , the point seems rather to be sensitive to the situation in which one is consider getting one’s fill, that is, an entirely different kind of prudence. The ‘principle’ at work here seems to be something like this: To the extent that all one takes to be at issue is e.g. eating or drinking one’s fill, then it is the sort of ‘awareness’ (*zhījué*) that characterises ‘the mind of man’, but that is simply not how human situations work; they tend to have a scope beyond that; questions of right and wrong, prudent or imprudent and so forth are always liable to arise. The story about Confucius’ disciple Zilu alluded to here is found in the *Zuozhuan*¹⁸⁰, and seems to have been a *cause célèbre* in the pre-Qin period, as it is also mentioned in the anti-Ru chapter of the *Mozi*¹⁸¹.

¹⁷⁸ ZZYL, *ibid.*

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁰ See *Zuozhuan*, 15th year of Duke Ai 哀公十五年

¹⁸¹ See Johnson (trans.), p. 368-369

The story is one of imprudence; in the messy political life of the state of Wei, Zilu went to serve as commander of a town under the aristocrat Kong Kui, whom the rightful heir to the throne decided to make an example of and then set upon. At the time Zilu was away, but upon hearing of the troubles he rode back to save his lord. At the gates, he met another of Confucius' disciples, Zigao, who told him there was nothing he could do, upon which Zilu replied:

食其食者不避其難。¹⁸²

One who has eaten another's food cannot run from his [the other's] troubles.

And indeed, the end of the story is that Zilu dies at the hands of the heir to the throne of Wei. What seems to be Zhu's point in telling the story is that Zilu, when he was eating at Kong Kui's table, should have taken the situation to involve all the messy politics of the state of Wei, rather than simply being a nice dinner or an opportunity to get a job. This is something of the sense in which I mean it when I say that 'awareness' (*zhījué*) consists in a 'taking as' that expresses knowledge or understanding; Zilu, Zhu's reproach seems to be, failed in grasping the full scope of the situation and merely thought with his belly.

Let us attempt to rephrase this in terms of, on the one hand our long list of features that we've claimed attaches to the term 'awareness' (*zhījué*), and on the other to see if our two 'main expressions' of Zhu's interpretation of the 'mind transmission' in terms of 'awareness' (*zhījué*)¹⁸³. From the way Zhu tells it, we must infer a situation where the offer to sit at Kong Kui's table was made. There apparently was a right way of going about it, 'moral patterns in it' (*yǒu yìlǐ cún yān*). To this Zilu did not respond. He did respond to the offer by going into Kong Kui's service. So, as to characteristics of 'awareness' (*zhījué*): 1. this is certainly explainable in terms of the *gǎnyìng*-model, 2. as Zhu tells it, there is little affective engagement (but we may perhaps infer it?), 3-4. as this was not a 'mind of the Way'-response we will leave those aspects to the side for the moment, 5. the response *was* to something in

¹⁸² *Zuo*zhuan, 15th year of Duke Ai 哀公十五年

¹⁸³ I.e. '此心之靈，其覺於理者，道心也；其覺於欲者，人心也' 'The numinous of this mind, when it is aware [jue] from [on the basis of] pattern [li] is the mind of the Way; when it is aware [jue] from [on the basis of] desire, it is the mind of man' and '心之虛靈知覺，一而已矣，而以為有人心、道心之異者，則以其或生於形氣之私，或原於性命之正，而所以為知覺者不同' In being empty, numinous and aware, the mind is simply one, and the distinction between the mind of man and the mind of the Way is because some awareness is born from the self-centredness of one's physical constitution and some awareness is borne of the correctness of one's normative constitution, so that by which they are awareness is not the same.'

the situation (There was something desirable on the table, perhaps), and importantly 6. the response was an action (namely going into Kong Kui's service).

But suppose the opposite had been the case, suppose Zilu had been more sensitive to the full scope of the situation: He would then still have responded to something which was in the situation, for Zhu tells us that there are 'moral patterns' (*yili*) even in such things as eating and drinking. Yet the response would require to be informed by his 'physical constitution' (*xingqi*), for one supposes he would have had to do something. As for the other way of describing 'mind of the Way'-responses, namely by reference to one's 'normative constitution' (*xingming*), this will look subtly different than the descriptions we've employed thus far; borrowing a style of expression from the last chapter, meeting with Kong Kui was 'ordained' (*ming*) for Zilu, but had he gotten it right, it would've been an occasion for 'acting out' some aspect of his 'moral nature' (*xing*).

In not taking the situation to involve these things and to respond accordingly, Zilu ended up illustrating a certain kind of failure, one we later on will see to have been in part intellectual.

Subtlety, rarefication and learnability

So Zhu thinks that the peril of 'mind of man'-responses, that is, 'awareness' (*zhijue*) emerging from one's 'physical constitution' (*xingqi*) and thus 'from (on the basis of) desire), lies in the conjunction of their necessity for engaging with the world and their passivity towards external things and events. If this is the only way in which one engages with the world, it would be problematic, but Zhu seems to think that as a matter of fact most of us do not engage with the world only in that way. This thought he illustrates with an example:

[...] 如父之慈其子，子之孝其父，常人亦能之，此道心之正也。¹⁸⁴

[...] for example when a father is kindly with his son and the son is filial towards his father; even ordinary are capable of this, this is the uprightness [characteristic] of the mind of the Way.

Evidently, the right sort of stuff is at the very least implicit in the doings of ordinary folk. The way Zhu continues this line of reasoning suggests something about what the problematic 'subtlety' consists in, despite the apparent ubiquity of 'the mind of the Way'. Appreciating

¹⁸⁴ ZZYL, *juan* 62, p. 188

this will require some set-up, however. In both the *Preface* and in our ZZYL-record Zhu characterises the ‘subtlety’ of ‘the mind of the Way’ as consisting in the following:

[...] 道心卻雜出於人心之間。¹⁸⁵

[...] the mind of the Way emerges intermixed within the mind of man

Rephrased into the example of the relationship of father and son, this may be taken to mean that the nature of that relationship is such that at most of the time it may be unclear whether one is being a good son out of genuine sentiment or because it, at any rate, is in one’s best interest. This fuzziness is not something Zhu thinks we should want to live with and so wants us to pay attention when we actually get it right (and again, he clearly thinks that we sufficiently often *do* get it right). Yet there is another way of seeing clearly how things really stand, although it is far from ideal; if the other end in the relationship simply isn’t pulling his weight. The reason it isn’t ideal is that Zhu is far less optimistic about the abilities of most of us to hold up our *own* end when this happens:

苟父一虐其子，則子必狠然以悖其父，此人心之所以危也。惟舜則不然，雖其父欲殺之，而舜之孝則未嘗替，此道心也。¹⁸⁶

But as soon as the father is cruel to his son, the son will necessarily ruthlessly go against his father; this is what is so perilous about the mind of man. Of course, Shun wasn’t like this, despite his father’s trying to kill him, his filiality never faltered; his was truly a mind of the Way.

The failure is instructive, however; for us, as it allows us to elaborate on the notion of ‘awareness’ (*zhījué*) as ‘taking as’ (in the sense described above); and for all sons everywhere, as Shun established what filiality *really* consists in. Let us consider the ‘normal’ case of a breakdown of the father-son relationship: One’s father is, in some way or other, cruel and oppressive (*niù*) and the son responds in kind out of a desire to be rid of the cruelty (that is, I interpret ‘ruthlessly going against his father’ as a species of ‘awareness’ (*zhījué*)). This response is evidently to something *in* the situation and so, in a sense, is justified; certain kinds of cruelty, one suspects Zhu would agree, should be met by ruthlessly going against them and if it were *only* a matter of cruelty the response would be appropriate. Yet something more is going on and it is something sufficiently binding that the ideal way of responding is not the one justified by the cruelty.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

What is peculiar about Shun, then? He was born to a particularly cruel father (and mother and brother); one's status as 'father' is not only a biological fact, it is also a normatively governed role¹⁸⁷, if one's father isn't acting the part, to the extent of being cruel, Zhu thinks, one might easily forget the duties incumbent on one as a son and answer in kind. What makes Shun exemplary is that, despite his father's complete inability to act as was incumbent on *him* as a father, he still managed to take him as a father and behave accordingly.

It is in this sense I think we are dealing with something which is appropriately glossed by 'taking a situation to be of a certain kind'; both the perspective which Zhu thinks most of us would take on an unfatherly father, and the one adopted by Shun in his heroic treatment of his father pick out something true of the situation; cruelty is a thing to be counteracted, but, Zhu seems to think, the relationship of father and son is such as to make categorical demands of one, demands that the behaviour of the other part cannot do anything to change. In this case we do seem to have some of the self-restraint that many commentators have noted¹⁸⁸.

Nonetheless, it is a queer kind of self-restraint; for Shun's filiality *did* move his father to change his behaviour; enforcing his 'will', so to speak, on him, thus changing the entire situation. This is to say that Shun cannot have simply subjugated his desire so as to follow a rule; rule-following doesn't typically change the nature of the game. Shun's actions in this sense nicely illustrate that there is a creative aspect of 'being aware from (on the basis of) pattern (*li*)'¹⁸⁹.

This story of fatherhood has shown that, despite the ubiquity of the sort of situations in which we do respond appropriately and perhaps often for the right reasons, the embeddedness of these responses within the messiness of everyday life makes nailing down where we get it right a difficult matter and it is this he takes to be meant by the word 'subtle' in the 'mind transmission'. When it comes to the exhortation to 'rarefy' these responses Zhu is less clear

¹⁸⁷ For a colourful take on what he calls 'Confucian role ethics', see Ames 2011. Ames seems to share Zhu's optimism with regard to family relations, and his book is thus conspicuously thin on the sort of abusive relations described here, even when he sets out to describe the limits of such an ethic in pp. 257-258.

¹⁸⁸ And in a rather unattractive fashion at that; few would, one hopes, agree with Zhu that duties to abusive parents are categorically binding, except perhaps abusive parents. Where one draws the line for duty-negating behaviour is of course a more difficult matter, evidently Shun's father was not 'beyond saving', despite his behaviour being of the sort that most would call a clear case of duty-negating behaviour.

¹⁸⁹ As we said in the introduction, we are following Zheng Zhemian's reading, which focused on Zhu's two famous glosses of the term as 'that by which it is thus' (*suǒ yǐ rán*) 所以然 and 'the way it must be' (*suǒ dāng rán*) 所當然, surveyed the use of *these* terms in the earlier philosophical literature and by Zhu, and found them to be, in Zhu, two different descriptions of the same type of process: namely bringing about certain states of affairs, and he suggested that, knowing the latter, one is capable of grasping and performing the latter. This suggested the informal gloss 'the (right) way of going about things' of the term 'pattern' (*li*) for ethical contexts.

about how it should be done (yet here one suspects that Zhu's pedagogical programme based around *The Four Books* would be an ingredient). Of course, mentions of spectacular successes against impossible odds, such as that of Shun, may also have a pedagogical value of its own in this regard.

Two lives: Successful and not

The things one meets with in the course of one's life, such as murderous fathers, are, as we saw when we met the father and son pair of the last story in the previous chapter 'ordained' (*mìng*). Yet as we saw in telling that story, even such awful situations present us with opportunities to respond in ways which may be called virtuous and which really make a difference. While virtuous responses in individual situations are fine things, Zhu seems to think that it is in the context of a whole life that this sort of responsiveness must ultimately be seen, and it is in this context that he interprets the injunction to 'unify' the two sorts of responses. The way in which Zhu does this, is by schematically presenting two kinds of courses through life, one in which the person leading the life is in fact leading it; while the other is characterised by a complete lack of agency.

The story comes after Zhu has rehearsed his argument that the 'mind of man' is an inescapable part of being human, and that it would be foolish to attempt to rid oneself of it, it begins with the following words:

然人於性命之理不明，而專為形氣所使，則流於人欲矣。¹⁹⁰

That said, if one is not clear about the patterns [*lǐ*] of one's normative constitution [*xìngmìng*], and solely becomes shaped by one's physical constitution [*xíngqì*], then one will flow into human desires.

We will recall that the straightforward equation of the 'mind of man' and 'human desires' (*rén yù*) was Cheng Yi's claim to fame in Chapter 2. Zhu is not here rebuking that claim, although he does this elsewhere in the text, here, however, he is simply stating how he thinks the pejorative term 'human desires' (*rén yù*) *actually* figures in this story. How does he do that? 'Human desires' (*rén yù*) are a result of what looks like an intellectual failure of a very particular sort: A failure of self-knowledge. That it is a failure of *self*-knowledge follows from the reading of the term 'normative constitution' (*xìngmìng*) we argued for in the last chapter; it is *one's own* 'normative constitution' (*xìngmìng*) that is at stake, and that includes not only

¹⁹⁰ ZZYL, *juan* 62, p. 1488

one's 'nature' (*xìng*), which Zhu tends to describe as similar for all, but also 'the cards one is given', so to speak, or more precisely 'what is ordained' (*mìng*) for one. The latter is, necessarily, individual; for some it is in the cards to be emperors; for others to be scholars of Chinese philosophy; others still are destined for lives *even worse* than these. These different stations in life provide for different angles into ethical life, we will now consider how Zhu describes this.

Zhu says that one's 'nature' (*xìng*) and 'what is ordained' (*mìng*) have a 'pattern' (*lǐ*), about which it is of the essence to 'get clear' (*mìng*), I think he means something like the following: we will again remember our more informal gloss of what we take Zhu to be using the word 'pattern' (*lǐ*) to say, namely 'the (right) way of going about something'. This suggests the following picture: Suppose one has a 'nature' (*xìng*); something that must be realised for one to lead a truly flourishing life, then there is surely the possibility that the situations one finds oneself in, 'what is ordained' (*mìng*) for one, can get in the way, or at least be less than conducive to one's proper flourishing (one thinks of Shun as a very obvious example of someone in precisely such a situation). Conversely, it also opens the possibility getting it right; understanding how one does that, how 'what is ordained' (*mìng*) for one can become a vehicle for the realisation of one's 'nature' (*xìng*) that a good life consists in, Zhu thinks, is a prerequisite for actually doing it. This is what I mean when I say that the failure described above is one of self-knowledge; that what is at issue is to understand how the conditions of one's life influence one's ability to lead a flourishing, ethical life, something Zhu thinks we do by acting in accordance with our 'nature' (*xìng*). We will now look at the language Zhu uses in discussing the failure itself.

The passage we are considering is a conditional sentence, in the previous two paragraphs we considered the protasis, let us now consider the apodosis; Zhu says that if one is unclear about the 'pattern' (*lǐ*) of one's 'normative constitution' (*xìngmìng*), how one 'gets it right' with regard to one's normative constitution, and

專為形氣所使，則流於人欲矣¹⁹¹

[...] solely becomes shaped by one's physical constitution [*xíngqì*], then one will flow into human desires.

This is where it becomes the tale of a life. What sort of life is it that is described here? An unhappy one, it seems; for it is a life in which the person living it is in an important way not

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

really living their own life; one is simply compelled by whatever happens to take one's fancy until finally one simply has no agency of one's own and succumbs to one's 'human desires' (*rén yù*). The language here is not that of an agent; the person living this life is 'solely shaped' (*zhūān shì*) by her 'physical constitution' (*xíng qì*), and in the end 'flows into' (*liú yú*) human desires (*rén yù*). The notion of 'human desires' (*rén yù*) is one that has caused some difficulty in the understanding of Zhu's thought; given what the words on the page literally mean, one would expect Zhu to explain it in some sort of appetitive way, that is, as if desire were at issue. This is not the case, however; this term, like its opposite, 'heavenly pattern' 天理 (*tiān lǐ*)¹⁹², we will remember both originate from the *Record of Music*, and Zhu tends to describe the so-called 'human desires' (*rén yù*), not as the presence of any particular desires, but rather as the absence of 'heavenly pattern' (*tiān lǐ*). This is not to say that the wrongful actions performed in the absence of 'heavenly pattern' (*tiān lǐ*) cannot be motivated by desires, when pushed on this Zhu usually mentions such things as sex and eating, but it is not to be equated with any of them¹⁹³. This is the grand scheme in which we will see Zhu placing what the 'mind transmission' says about the need to 'unify' the 'two minds'. What is at issue is leading a life worth living and is, in an important sense one's own.

The two preceding paragraphs have discussed Zhu's very schematic description of how a lack of self-knowledge can lead to one not living a flourishing life; we will now discuss a, no less schematic, description of a flourishing life. Zhu describes this in the following way:

如其達性命之理，則雖人心之用，而無非道心 [...] ¹⁹⁴
 'If one arrives at the pattern [*lǐ*] of one's normative constitution [*xìng mìng*]
 [understands how to get it right as concerns one's nature and lot in life], then even if it
 is the mind of man that manifests, it would still be nothing but the mind of the Way'

As it is merely the converse of what was said above, we do not here need to discuss the antecedent further, but what of the consequent? The language is certainly very different from what we saw Zhu saying above, for one, he does not say something like '則行乎天理矣' 'and then heavenly pattern will be carried out.' What he says is that 'mind of man' 'manifests'

¹⁹² Although, for sake of consistency with the previous page, we should perhaps rather translate it as 'the heaven-instituted way of getting it right', a translation that wouldn't be without merit; the referent of the term is usually the 'three guides and five constants' (*sāngāng wucháng*) 三綱五常, three relationships and five virtues that Zhu would describe precisely as 'getting it right', and that are 'natural', that is, they come from 'heaven'.

¹⁹³ A good discussion of the misreadings of these terms, both historical and modern, and a convincing interpretation are found in Yan, pp. 232-257. Qian, Vol.1 pp. 447-460 also has a comprehensive discussion of this pair of terms.

¹⁹⁴ ZZYL, *ibid.*

(*yong*) ‘it is nothing but the mind of the Way’. ‘Manifest’ (*yong*) is another piece of responsive terminology; any given thing has a variety of potential responses that can be ‘actualised’ or ‘manifest’ depending on external factors¹⁹⁵. What I take this to mean is that even the most pedestrian of activities (manifestations of ‘the mind of man’) have some of the same deliberate, creative features that we saw in Shun’s behaviour towards his father¹⁹⁶.

In light of these two life stories, we see that, on Zhu’s reading, the injunction to ‘unify’ was no trifling matter; the point is to be thoroughly living one’s life, as the sort of creature one is within the sort of situation that one finds oneself, but without being a victim, or merely passively dragged along by one’s situation. What is required of one in order to achieve this level of ‘deliberateness’ in all of one’s activities is no mean feat, of course; it is nothing less than a Herculean effort of self-knowledge, understanding one’s ‘nature’ (*xìng*), what is ‘ordained’ (*mìng*) for one and how these can be made to work in concert.

4.3 Awareness , Luck and Action

Let us now take stock of what our three stories have told us: We began by seeing how, when human beings come into the world, we come equipped with a basic responsiveness; this is what enables us to engage with the world, although initially, we are limited to such responses as are enabled by our ‘physical constitution’ (*xíngqì*), these happen from or on the basis of desire. Such desires are necessary, but they expose us to the peril that we may become simply the playthings of external things and we may find ourselves shaped exclusively by our ‘physical constitution’ (*xíngqì*). The likelihood of this, for most of us, is fairly small; for in our significant relationships (exemplified by that of father and son) we learn ways of responding to situations that are more nuanced and allow for more kinds of significance than wanting a snack or to sleep with someone (which is not to deny that these, from time to time are entirely legitimate things to want). Yet having gone through various kinds of ‘socialisation’, one may still experience, from time to time, that one does things which are seen to have been motivated by too narrow a perspective on things; perhaps one was angered

¹⁹⁵ Discussions of this term and its partner ‘substance’ (*tǐ*) 體 are found in Qian, Vol. 1, pp. 469-481, Zheng 2011, pp. 62-73

¹⁹⁶ Yet one has to ask, given that Zhu’s examples of ‘desire-motivated’ ‘awareness’ (*zhījué*) that Zhu thinks one cannot be without include basic human needs such as eating and drinking, does he imagine that a sage changes the world by going to the toilet?

by a trifling matter¹⁹⁷. What is then required of one, if one wishes to live in a way that accords with the sort of person one, in one's better moments, takes oneself to be is that one undertakes a rather drastic process of reflection. What one has to figure out is how the person one, in one's better moments, takes oneself to be can be realised within the overall situation one finds oneself in. If one *per impossibile* manages this, even such trifling matters as getting a snack will be imbued with significance and will not be the result of one being tossed around by one's 'physical constitution' (*xíngqì*). In this latter case I suspect that one will have achieved the lofty goal of sagehood.

Luck, responsiveness and deliberation

Two related features are particularly striking; the first is the role what is often called moral luck plays in what we have seen Zhu to say; that is that Zhu allots quite a lot of space to how one deals with things that, in various ways, are out of one's hands, this deserves some consideration. The second is the notion of action Zhu here elaborates, which makes no explicit reference to any such notions as deliberation, intention and belief, ingredients which tend to figure prominently when modern philosophers discuss action.

Let us begin with the notion of luck so as to see how it ties together with (moral) action and why it is that certain things that might worry European philosopher do not seem to worry Zhu nearly as much. Bernard Williams, in his seminal essay on moral luck, describes a view prominent enough to mention in the following terms:

There has been a strain of philosophical thought which identifies the end of life as happiness, happiness as reflective tranquillity, and tranquillity as the product of self-sufficiency- what is not in the domain of the self is not in its control and so subject to luck and the contingent enemies of tranquillity. The most extreme versions of this outlook are certain doctrines of classical antiquity (...) while the good man, the sage, was immune to the impact of incident luck, it was a matter of what may be called constitutive luck that one was a sage, or capable of becoming one (...)¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁷ As Zhu says: '如喜怒，人心也。然無故而喜，喜至於過而不能禁；無故而怒，怒至於甚而不能遏，是皆為人心所使也。須是喜其所當喜，怒其所當怒，乃是道心。' 'Take for example rejoicing and anger, these are the mind of man. If one rejoices without cause, and rejoices excessively and cannot contain it; or if one is angered without cause, angered in the extreme and unable to restrain it, then one is being shaped by one's mind of man. One has to rejoice at what one must rejoice at; be angered by what one must be angered by, only then is it the mind of the Way.' (ZZYL, *juan* 78, p. 2011)

¹⁹⁸ Williams 1981, p.20

Aspects of this are of course familiar, both from what we have seen in Zhu, and in earlier thinkers¹⁹⁹; Zhu too would have us be wary of the kinds of responses that unduly empower the environment towards us; yet it also seems that at the very heart of the story we have been telling, it is not so much the freedom from contingency and luck that is of importance, but rather the creative interplay with contingent events that Zhu seeks to inspire. Williams also mentions another approach to immunity from luck, which he describes as being roughly Kantian and which he has very little sympathy for, and which one suspects Zhu also would have little sympathy for, namely the view that:

Anything that is the product of happy or unhappy contingency is no proper object of moral assessment, and no proper determinant of it, either. Just as, in the realm of character, it is motive that counts, not style, or powers, or endowment, so in action it is not changes actually effected in the world, but intention.²⁰⁰

Williams then goes on to discuss the ways in which the outcomes of planned actions might influence our view of whether or not those actions were justified to begin with, curiously, this is not relevant to our present concerns and a little further on we will reflect on why that is. Let us see where Zhu, as we've seen him in our texts, would stand on the issue of self-sufficiency with regard to the vagaries of fate.

There are two places in our discussions where we have seen Zhu be explicit that one's control over one's own life is problematized: In our basic responsivity to the outside world, that is, when the 'desires of nature are stirred and move' and in what sort of things are 'ordained' (*mìng*) for one (In the previous chapter we saw such things as imprisonment, whether one achieves an appropriate position, and one's father being mentioned as things which are, in this sense, out of one's control, the subject of fatherhood we've returned to in this chapter as well). In the former case, when it comes to being stirred to movement, Zhu to some extent shares the view of the ancients in thinking that excessively exposing oneself to loss of control is to be avoided, and if being thus exposed isn't necessarily blameworthy in itself, then the sort of behaviour that indulging is a slippery slope to, namely the deeply problematic 'human desires' (*rén yù*), is. At the same time, this desiderative way of engaging

¹⁹⁹ The theme of self-sufficiency in the face of adverse circumstances is one of the threads going through much Warring States thought, and on the assumption that Brooks and Brooks are correct in their dating, it is already present in the earliest of the *Analects* (Brooks & Brooks, 1998, p. 10) e.g. 4.2: '子曰：『不仁者不可以久處約，不可以長處樂。仁者安仁，知者利仁。』' 'He said: One who is not humane cannot remain in privation through the duration; cannot remain for long remain in happiness. The humane find peace in humaneness; the clever seek to benefit from it.'

²⁰⁰ Williams 1981, pp. 20-21

with the world is itself the basis of all other ways of engaging with the world; being situated bodily is the foundation of both acting in the world and having anything be ‘ordained’ (*mìng*) for one, so short of suicide, there is no way of completely cutting oneself off from risk.

‘What is ordained’ (*mìng*) for one is not presented in the same negative light, even though it may include all sorts of indemnities which are outside one’s control. Such things, Zhu seems to think, are challenges which one should aspire to rise to and should one fail to do so, as he thinks most would in the face of, say, a cruel father, it is not because of ‘what is ordained’ (*mìng*), but because of the dangers of ‘mind of man’-responses; and really it is an intellectual failure to adequately understand what is going on. We may find this problematic, for one can imagine two people, both completely common and so basically decent, where one lives a more or less happy life and the other has his life ruined because of something out of his hands and is himself to blame for it (in an admittedly extreme case). Yet the aim for Zhu is not to remove contingency and luck from the picture, it is not even that one should be unaffected by these things; the aim is to learn to respond creatively to such situations, often in ways that, like Shun with his father, fundamentally change the situation²⁰¹.

We will note that none of the things that expose one to risk in this grander fashion, perhaps most importantly our relationships to others (familial, social, political), are things Zhu would want us to shun; one aspect of this is no doubt that he thinks that it is through these relationships that we stand a chance at meaningful lives²⁰², another, I suspect, is the account of action we have seen at work here. A simplified account of how intentional action works would go something like the following: An intention is what happens when a desire (say, for a snack) meets a belief (say, that there is some chocolate in the cupboard) and intentions both motivate and give rise to whatever instrumental desires required to achieve the desired result (walking over to the cupboard, opening it etc.). This sort of account puts the weight on the prospective and deliberative aspect of action²⁰³, and in light of the laying of plans it is very obvious why one would be deeply disturbed by contingent factors; luck, especially bad luck, can lead to all sorts of things going wrong in one’s intended actions.

²⁰¹ Angle 2010, pp. 95-98 has several interesting examples of this ideal.

²⁰² This is of course not an original view of Zhu’s; Ames 2011, in particular pp. 159-193, argues that it is at the very heart of ‘the Confucian project’.

²⁰³ Nomy Arpaly humorously notes: ‘Characters in Hollywood movies encounter a lot of car chases. [...] And in the work of moral psychologists, people deliberate and reflect *a lot*. They deliberate, one sometimes feels, whenever they perform an action, and certainly whenever they act for a good reason.’ (Arpaly 2003, p.20)

Zhu, in our texts, has little to say about such things as intentions, beliefs and deliberation, yet he *does* describe how one can act in ways which are responsible and where one does effect a genuine change (that no doubt accords with one's wishes). In his description of action, Zhu starts from another end; he starts with the thought that from the moment one is born *something or other* is already playing out around one, and these things that are playing out either exert a push or a pull on one; that is, they give rise to 'awareness' (*zhījué*) that is 'from (on the basis of) desire'. This in turn is to say that at least the basic sort of action one performs is performed 'on the defensive'; one is responding to things, not deliberating what one wants or doesn't want. When Zhu goes on to describe actions of a more complex sort, where one might imagine a conflict of interest (and so, deliberation), such as in the case of Shun and his father²⁰⁴, Zhu takes this on the same model, a model where what is happening around plays a large role in governing what one does, as his basis. So for Zhu, any kind of action is, to some extent, a response to a situation where some things are out of one's hands.

What is special about the actions where one 'gets it right', those that involve 'awareness' (*zhījué*) 'from (on the basis of) pattern (*lǐ*)' is that they involve responding to what actually is important in the situation. If one is sufficiently capable of this, and manages the mammoth task of understanding how to get it right with regards to one's 'nature' (*xìngmìng*) and what is 'ordained' (*mìng*) for one, one will be able to respond in these sorts of creative ways, where one isn't a victim of contingency, but one is not free of it either. Rather, the contingencies one faces become vehicles for expressing one's 'nature' (*xìng*).

4.4 Concluding Remarks

In this chapter, we started by comparing what the previous chapter suggested about the term 'awareness' (*zhījué*) with how the term has been treated by two eminent scholars of Zhu's thought and found some materials for enriching our account and some thoughts that are perhaps best left where we found them. We then proceeded to read these elements into three examples of Zhu's, which in turn were read as explications of the 'mind transmission'. The description of the mind in moral action that emerged from this procedure was seen to be rich and fascinating; action was seen as a response to the physical and social situation one finds oneself in, and *virtuous* action was seen as a response that somehow *changes* the situation one

²⁰⁴ Those of us who aren't sages would perhaps be guilty of thinking 'sure, he's my father, but I don't want to die'.

finds oneself in. What we did not see, was the sort of focus on self-restraint or self-denial that had been found by previous scholars. In the conclusion we will see how the overall shape of this thesis contributed to this picture.

5 Conclusion

Human beings are exposed; whether in our relations to others narrowly construed; or in the wider sense of our political communities; or in the wider sense still of our life on this planet, we are exposed to risk; the loss of a loved one; that our government suddenly becomes insane; or that the environment becomes nigh on unliveable. The notion of mind and action we have been discussing throughout the preceding papers seems incredibly sensitive to just these factors in life and responds with a tremendous optimism; consider once again Shun's filial piety (*xiao*), which not only moved his father away from his murderous ways, but also established the standard for what filial piety (*xiào*) should be like. In this sense, it is a shame that we did not emphasise the political context in which the *Preface* was written more, for a responsive theory of mind and action is precisely the sort of thing one would expect someone who was facing adversity on several fronts would formulate.

Of course, the adversity would later be responded to in grand style, not by Zhu himself, but by the movement he gave direction to, a movement that saw the *Preface* as one of its founding documents and that, in turn, became the source of adversity for other fringe figures to respond against²⁰⁵.

In the preceding three chapters, we have seen our texts placed in a context where they can be seen to take part in an ongoing discussion, where both borrowings and the positions which are rejected can be seen. We have found that Zhu had a responsive model of the mind and we have seen a sustained attempt at getting clear about what it is that influences the ability of the mind to respond well to different kinds of situations; and we have seen how, on the basis of this model, a vision of responsive agency was formulated; one in which the ethical ideal is one who, regardless of what dire straits he or she should find themselves in, was able to respond so to the situation in such a way as to vring about *change*.

That we could arrive at such a story depended crucially on rejecting the assumption that what we were seeing was a systematic philosopher engaged in deriving doctrines from metaphysical principles. For once one opens oneself to the thought that he is engaged in a genuine dialogue with the text, with previous interpreters and with his students, he practically throws revealing details at one: a responsive model of the mind; stories of responses that worked and that didn't; descriptions what it may be like to be someone capable of improving

²⁰⁵ As Kim 2000, p. 125 reminds us, the cyclical patterns of inhalation and exhalation is another image of the *gānyng*-model.

the world. Reading these things in light of the text of the ‘mind transmission’ suggested a vision of life lived in the world and not for the sake of salvation beyond. It is a sophisticated expression of what has often been called the ‘this-worldly’ focus of Confucianism.

This is not to say that there are not shortcomings to the approach we have adopted in this thesis; because of its narrow focus, we know a lot about one of the things Zhu thought about in the autumn of 1191, but it is not at all obvious which further inferences we can legitimately make. For example, seeing as Zhu, depending on which text he is commenting on, has all these different stories he tells about the mind, what is the relationship between them? Another interesting question, that has been devoted no space at all, is: How is this immense focus on contingency (that we are ascribing to him) related to his repeated insistence, here too *contra* Cheng Yi, that the *Yijing* was first and foremost a book of divination and not a book of wisdom? Inuitively, these things seem like they would be related. One feels that it would have helped if it had been possible to say something more general about the nature of philosophising during the Song, but time and space²⁰⁶ have prevented this. This, and the many other questions this thesis leaves open, will have to await further work.

²⁰⁶ And inexperience.

Bibliography

The bibliography is divided into two sections: The first containing historical primary sources; and the second, modern secondary sources. The historical sources are in some cases listed according to author; in some, editor; and those where authorship is disputed, only the title of the work is listed. The databases I have used are also listed among the historical sources.

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Appendix: Texts and translations

In this appendix, the reader will find the texts this thesis focuses on. The *Preface* and the two letters to Zheng Kexue are abbreviated to only include materials relevant to this thesis. As the main points of the *Preface* are discussed within the thesis itself, I have not annotated it.

For the ZZYL-record, I have not made any changes to the Chinese text, but my translation goes to some length to make it clear who is saying what; so when Zhu is quoting Zheng Kexue, those quotes are separated out from the main text, and when there is a change of speaker, I add a paragraph. I have also added some annotations, mostly limited to locating quotations.

The letters are responses to questions sent to Zhu by Zheng. In them Zhu first quotes something from a letter from Zheng and then responds. The editors of the edition I'm using make the speaker explicit by the length of the lines (full lines are Zheng, shortened lines are Zhu's responses). This solution does not seem quite so attractive here, so I have added identifications of speaker both to the Chinese and English texts. Also there annotations are kept to a minimum

Extract from *The Preface to the Mean*

For what was the *Mean and Commonality* written? Master Zisi wrote it, fearing lest the learning of the Way would lose its transmission. For ever since the sagely and spiritual men of high antiquity took up the work of Heaven and established the bounds, the transmission of the succession of the Way came of itself. In the classics, it is seen in 'sincerely hold to that Mean!', which was what Yao passed on to Shun; and 'The mind of man is perilous, the mind of the Way is subtle, you must rarefy and unify them, and sincerely hold to that Mean!', this was what Shun passed on to Yu. How Yao's one saying hits the mark and is exhaustive! Shun's adding another three sayings is his way of clarifying Yao's one saying, it must be like this and only then can one begin to approximate it.

I will attempt to elaborate on it: The mind, whether empty and alert or aware [in stillness and in outer-centred activity], is simply one. The reason for having the distinction between the mind of man and the mind of the Way, is that some is born from the self-centredness of one's physical constitution and some originates in the correctness of one's normative constitution,

and the way in which they are awareness is not the same. This is the reason some is imperilled and unsettled, while some is subtle and hard to see. Nonetheless, none are without this form, so even the highest of the wise cannot be without a mind of man; yet none are without this nature, so even the lowest of fools cannot be without a mind of the Way. The two emerge intermixed within the mind, and if one doesn't know how to govern them, the imperilled will be more perilous still; the subtle even subtler still and Heavenly pattern will have nothing with which to overcome human desires. To rarefy them is to carefully distinguish between the two, avoiding any intermingling; to unify them is to hold to the straightness of the original mind without departing. If one can persist in this, without cease, and one must make the mind of the Way constantly be the ruler of one's whole person, and have the mind of man ever obey its command, then the imperilled will be settled, the subtle will be firm and in motion and stillness; speaking and doing one will of one's own be without the faults of going too far and not attaining.

中庸何為而作也？子思子憂道學之失其傳而作也。蓋自上古聖神繼天立極，而道統之傳有自來矣。其見於經，則「允執厥中」者，堯之所以授舜也；「人心惟危，道心惟微，惟精惟一，允執厥中」者，舜之所以授禹也。堯之一言，至矣，盡矣！而舜復益之以三言者，則所以明夫堯之一言，必如是而後可庶幾也。

蓋嘗論之：心之虛靈知覺，一而已矣，而以為有人心、道心之異者，則以其或生於形氣之私，或原於性命之正，而所以為知覺者不同，是以或危殆而不安，或微妙而難見耳。然人莫不有是形，故雖上智不能無人心，亦莫不有是性，故雖下愚不能無道心。二者雜於方寸之間，而不知所以治之，則危者愈危，微者愈微，而天理之公卒無以勝夫人欲之私矣。精則察夫二者之間而不雜也，一則守其本心之正而不離也。從事於斯，無少間斷，必使道心常為一身之主，而人心每聽命焉，則危者安、微者著，而動靜云為自無過不及之差矣。²⁰⁷

Record from *The Classified Conversations of Master Zhu*

Because he had received a letter from Zheng Zishang inquiring about the mind of man and Mind of the Way, the gentleman said:

²⁰⁷ SSJZ, p. 14

“The numinous of this mind, when it is aware from [on the basis of] pattern is the mind of the Way; when it is aware from [on the basis of] desire, it is the mind of man. I, Kexue, take the liberty to follow the *Preface* and take the mind of man to emerge from the physical constitution; and the mind of the way to be grounded in the normative constitution. So I should think that being aware from pattern can be called [equated with] the normative constitution; and being aware from desires can be called [equated with] one’s physical constitution and so forth. I, Kexue, closely contemplate what the preface to the Mean calls [having] ‘the mind of the way always being the master of one’s whole person, and the mind of man will always follow its command.’”

And then he understands where people went wrong in the past; before, people would hold that one can have the mind of the way, and that one must not have a mind of man, now he knows that it isn’t so. The mind of man emerges from one’s physical constitution, how could one be rid of it? That said, if one is not clear about the pattern of one’s normative constitution and solely become shaped by one’s physical constitution one will flow into human desires. If one realises the pattern of one’s normative constitution, then, even if the mind of man manifests itself, it will still not be anything but the mind of the way [manifesting]. Mencius’ reason for pointing to form and beauty as heavenly nature is this. If one does not understand the meaning of ‘realising one’s form’²⁰⁸, then how would that be any different from what Gaozi says about eating and beauty?²⁰⁹ ‘Hold to it, and you keep it; abandon it, and you lose it’²¹⁰ How would the mind be kept or lost? This is precisely where the border for distinguishing between the mind of man and the mind of the way lies, and Mencius is pointing it especially out so as to make it clear to scholars.

‘I, Kexue, think one must have the mind of the way, and only then can one apply one’s mind of man and in the mind of man one must also recognise the mind of the way.’

If one only uses one’s mind of man, and doesn’t know one’s mind of the way, then one will certainly be lost in the lands of abandonment, perversity, crookedness and wastefulness. If one merely keeps the mind of the Way and wishes to separate off the mind of man, then that would be to divide up nature [xìng] and what is ordained [mìng] as two things, and what one would then be calling ‘the mind of the Way’, would be empty and non-existent, it would flow

²⁰⁸ Quotation from *Mencius* 7A.38

²⁰⁹ Quotation from *Mencius* 6A.4

²¹⁰ Quotation from *Mencius* 6A.8

off into the teachings of the Buddhists and Daoists, and it wouldn't be what the book of Yu points to. Was this not understood?'

I, Daya,²¹¹ said: 'Our predecessors often say that the mind of the way is the mind of the heavenly nature and that the mind of man is that of human desires. When you now mix them together like this, is that all right?'

He (Zhu Xi) said: 'Seeing as the mind of man is so bad, then one ought to completely extinguish this body and only then will the mind of the way begin to be clear. Moreover, why doesn't Shun first mention the mind of the way and then the mind of man?'

I, Daya, said: 'If it's like this, then the mind of man is born from the vital energy of the blood, and the mind of the way is born from Heavenly pattern; the mind of man can be good or not, whereas the mind of the way is nothing but Heavenly pattern.'

He (Zhu Xi) said: 'The mind of the way is that in this body that has awareness and desires and preferences such as 'I desire humaneness'²¹², 'following one's heart's desires'²¹³ and 'it is the desires of the nature that are stirred by things and move'²¹⁴, how could one be without these! Yet if one becomes enticed by things to the point of drowning among them, then that would cause harm. So the sage takes it that the mind of man, thus construed, has awareness; has preferences and desires. But if it lacks a ruler it flows of into oblivion and revolt, one cannot depend on it so as to be settled, and thus it is perilous. The mind of the way on the other hand is the mind of moral patterns, it *can* serve as the ruler of the mind of man and the mind of man depends on it as a standard. To discuss it in terms of eating: Whenever one is hungry or thirsty and wants to drink and eat so as to get one's fill, it is the mind of man. However, there are necessarily moral patterns in it; there are [situations where] one can eat, and [situations where] one can't. Things like Zilu dining with Kong Kui, that is [a situation where] one cannot eat. We can also put it this way: when a father is kindly with his son, and the son is filial towards his father; even ordinary are capable of this, and this is the uprightness

²¹¹ Yu Daya is the recorder of this record, hence the first-person pronoun.

²¹² Quotation from *Analects* 7.30

²¹³ Quotation from *Analects* 2.4

²¹⁴ Quotation from *Record of Music*, Section 7

[characteristic] of the mind of the Way. But as soon as the father is cruel to his son, the son will necessarily ruthlessly go against his father; this is what is so perilous about the mind of man. Of course, Shun wasn't like this, despite his father's trying to kill him, his filiality never faltered; his was truly a mind of the Way. Thus one must make the mind of man adhere to the area allotted to it by the mind of the way, only then will it work. Even so, the mind of the way [as I'm talking about it] emerges intermixed with the mind of man; it is subtle and difficult to spot. So one must rarefy it and unify them, and only then one can hold to the Mean.

Nonetheless, these are not two minds; it is only the distinction between moral patterns and human desires. Lu Zijing²¹⁵ also gets this right, saying: 'If Shun thought the mind of man was completely bad, then he should have said it and make people avoid it! But he stops at only saying that it's perilous; so it is only that it cannot be relied upon to be settled. The reason he says 'rarefy' is that he wants it to be inspected in its pure form and not in its intermixed form.'²¹⁶ This saying is of course right. What Zheng Zishang said is also completely fine, but when it comes to [what he says about] the mind of the way onward, he only talks about a vacuous non-existent thing, and is wont to slide into the learning of the Buddhists and Daoists. This Sakyamuni leader of vacuity; can one be hungry, without wanting to eat? If one is cold, can one not desire to be clothed? Can one make the things living men desire go away? Even if one wanted to extinguish them, in the end, one wouldn't be able to.'

「因鄭子上書來問人心、道心，先生曰：『此心之靈，其覺於理者，道心也；其覺於欲者，人心也。』可學竊尋中庸序，以人心出於形氣，道心本於性命。蓋覺於理謂性命，覺於欲謂形氣云云。可學近觀中庸序所謂『道心常為一身之主，而人心每聽命焉』，又知前日之失。向來專以人可以有道心，而不可以有人心，今方知其不然。人心出於形氣，如何去得！然人於性命之理不明，而專為形氣所使，則流於人欲矣。如其達性命之理，則雖人心之用，而無非道心，孟子所以指形色為天性者以此。若不明踐形之義，則與告子『食、色』之言又何以異？『操之則存，捨之則亡』，心安有存亡

²¹⁵ Lu Xiangshan, friend and frequent sparring partner of Zhu's. As their discussions on various points concerning learning and doctrine became fiercer, their friendship came under strain. Lu was also a great inspiration for the so called 'Learning of the Mind' (*xīn xué* 心學) that came to prominence during the Ming era. Chen 2000, pp. 341-421 describes their exchanges from start to finish.

²¹⁶ Lu Xiangshan never says exactly this in his *Collected Writings*, but the two agree in being adamant in denying that there are two minds. See e.g. *Xiangshanji*, *juan* 1, p. 2. Of course, Zhu and Lu knew each other fairly well, so it is not surprising that Zhu would have heard him say things that his editors did not write down.

？此正人心、道心交界之辨，而孟子特指以示學者。可學以為必有道心，而後可以用人心，而於人心之中，又當識道心。若專用人心而不知道心，則固流入於放僻邪侈之域；若只守道心，而欲屏去人心，則是判性命為二物，而所謂道心者，空虛無有，將流於釋老之學，而非虞書之所指者。未知然否？」大雅云：「前輩多云，道心是天性之心，人心是人欲之心。今如此交互取之，當否？」曰：「既是人心如此不好，則須絕滅此身，而後道心始明。且舜何不先說道心，後說人心？」大雅云：「如此，則人心生於血氣，道心生於天理；人心可以為善，可以為不善，而道心則全是天理矣。」曰：「人心是此身有知覺，有嗜欲者，如所謂『我欲仁』，『從心所欲』，『性之欲也，感於物而動』，此豈能無！但為物誘而至於陷溺，則為害爾。故聖人以為此人心，有知覺嗜欲，然無所主宰，則流而忘反，不可據以為安，故曰危。道心則是義理之心，可以為人心之主宰，而人心據以為準者也。且以飲食言之，凡饑渴而欲得飲食以充其飽且足者，皆人心也。然必有義理存焉，有可以食，有不可以食。如子路食於孔悝之類，此不可食者。又如父之慈其子，子之孝其父，常人亦能之，此道心之正也。苟父一虐其子，則子必狼然以悖其父，此人心之所以危也。惟舜則不然，雖其父欲殺之，而舜之孝則未嘗替，此道心也。故當使人心每聽道心之區處，方可。然此道心卻雜出於人心之間，微而難見，故必須精之一之，而後中可執。然此又非有兩心也，只是義理、人欲之辨爾。陸子靜亦自說得是，云：『舜若以人心為全不好，則須說不好，使人去之。今止說危者，不可據以為安耳。言精者，欲其精察而不為所雜也。』此言亦自是。今鄭子上之言都是，但於道心下，卻一向說是箇空虛無有之物，將流為釋老之學。然則彼釋迦是空虛之魁，饑能不欲食乎？寒能不假衣乎？能令無生人之所欲者乎？雖欲滅之，終不可得而滅也。」²¹⁷

From Letter 10 to Zheng Zishang

[Zheng:] The numinous of this mind is the mind of the Way; if the mind of the Way is preserved and the mind is empty, how would one only understand these few things, and only them?

[Zhu:] The numinous of this mind, in being aware from [on the basis of] pattern is the mind of the Way; in being aware from [on the basis of] desire, it is the mind of man. Yesterday when I

²¹⁷ ZZYL, *juan* 78, p. 2013

answered [Cai] Jitong, the formulation was a bit unfortunate, and cannot be relied upon as an explanation²¹⁸.

[Zheng:]此心之靈，即道心也。道心苟存，而此心虛，則無所不知，而豈只知此數者而止耶？

[Zhu:]此心之靈，其覺於理者，道心也；其覺於欲者，人心也。昨《答季通書》語却未瑩，不足據以為說。²¹⁹

From Letter 11 to Zheng Zishang

[Zheng:] ‘The numinous of this mind, when it is aware from pattern, it is the mind of the Way; when it is aware from desire it is the mind of man.’ When I, Kexue, received your explanation of this saying I found it immensely inspiring. But you say that the formulation in your reply to [Cai] Jitong’s letter was unfortunate, that it cannot be relied upon as an explanation. I, Kexue, take the liberty of following the *Preface to the Mean* which says that the mind of man emerges from one’s physical constitution, and the mind of the Way emerges from one’s normative constitution; and I thought the letter to Jitong was clarifying this point. What you now say is an explanation with one root, namely the normative constitution, and it doesn’t even mention the physical constitution. I, Kexue, brashly suspect [!] that my previous understanding of ‘the numinous of the mind’ was mistaken and that you wanted to awaken me from my stupidity, and so directly pointing to the origin, so as to avoid me wandering off. And it was *not* to say that one’s physical constitution doesn’t participate and that everything emerges from the mind. I foolishly believe that, being aware from pattern, [the mind is] one and rooted in one’s normative constitution, and this is the mind of the Way; when one is aware from desire, it involves the physical constitution and this is the mind of man. Is this more like it?

[Zhu:] *The Preface to the Mean* I’ve since finished revising, I’m copying it to you on another paper. Your explanation is also, in broad outline, correct.

²¹⁸ Cai Jitong was yet another pupil of Zhu’s, the problematic part of the problematic letter involves identifying what issues from one’s physical constitution as ‘nothing but human desires’ and what issues from one’s normative constitution as ‘nothing but Heavenly pattern’

²¹⁹ ZZWJ, *juan* 56, p. 2713

(Zheng)『此心之靈，其覺於理者，道心也；其覺於欲者，人心也。』可學蒙喻此語，極有開發。但先生又云：『向《答季通書》語未瑩，不足據以為說』可學竊尋《中庸序》云『人心出於形氣，道心本於性命』而《答季通書》乃所以發明此意，今如所說，却是一本性命說，而不及形氣。可學竊疑向所聞『此心之靈』一段所見差謬，先生欲覺其愚迷，故直於本原處指示，使不走作，非謂形氣無預而皆出於心。愚意以為，覺於理，則一本於性命，而為道心；覺於欲，則涉於形氣，而為人。心如此所見如何？(Zhu)《中庸序》後亦改定，別紙錄去來喻大概，亦已得之矣²²⁰

²²⁰ ZZWJ, *juan* 56, p.2716