

# Folk Filial Piety in Taiwan: The “Twenty-four Filial Exemplars”

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**Introduction (August, 2005).** This paper was originally drafted for an international seminar, “The Psycho-Cultural Dynamics of the Confucian Family, Past and Present,” sponsored by the International Cultural Society of Korea. The text was published by the society in a book with that title in 1986 under the editorship of Walter H. Slote (pp 47-106). That volume also includes a summary of participants’ discussion of the paper.

The original, 1986 conference paper has here been modified in that all Chinese words have been converted to internationally standard Pinyin spellings, with the exception of “Taiwan” (Táiwān 臺灣) and “Taipei” (Táiběi 臺北), which are construed as English. The data tables and bibliography have been re-alphabetized to accommodate the change. A small number of proof corrections have been made and characters added for names of publishers in the bibliography.

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“Filiality must be pursued with all one’s might; and  
loyalty be sustained to the very end.”

Thousand-Character Classic<sup>2</sup>

### Prologue: Filial Piety

“Filiality, or filial piety (xiào 孝) is the guiding value permeating all aspects of Chinese society.” That, whatever it means, is the opinion most generally elicited in Taiwan from Chinese of all walks of life whenever the question of values comes under discussion. In Taiwan official circles, filiality is often described in a matrix with other virtues. People speak, for example, of “the eight virtues” (bādé 八德) (universally remembered in the order in which they occur as names of streets in Taipei: Loyalty, Filiality, Benevolence, Love, Sincerity, Righteousness, Harmony, and Tranquility).<sup>3</sup> But there is no doubt, at least for traditional Chinese, that filiality is supreme among all these virtues. Wolfgang L. Grichting, in his broad statistical survey on Taiwan values in 1970 (Grichting 1971) asked his informants to select the most important virtue to stress in raising children, from among the modern terms “obedience” (fúcong 服從), “cooperation” (hézuò 合作), “self-discipline” (zìzhì 自治), and “independence” (dúlì de xìnggé 獨立的性格).” Obedience and cooperation accounted for eighty percent of the replies among Buddhists and folk religionists; between forty-five and sixty percent among Christians and atheists. Had filial piety been one of the options, it seems likely that the replies would easily have eclipsed even these, probably for all groups.

Filiality, whether in pre-Communist mainland China or in contemporary Taiwan, is a focal concern not only in discussions of childrearing. It is central in all thinking about

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<sup>1</sup>-© 1986 David K. Jordan. A portion of the material for this paper was collected in 1984-85 while I was a Language and Research Fellow under the joint sponsorship of the Committee on Scholarly and Scientific Exchange with the United States, Academia Sinica, Republic of China, and of the Inter-University Program for Chinese Studies [Stanford Center] in Taipei. Material was also collected in 1976 during a sabbatical leave partially funded by the Chinese Cultural Center, New York. This financial support is most gratefully acknowledged. Reference to China and the Chinese throughout this article excludes Chinese under the Communist government, whom I have not studied. I am grateful to Suzanne Cahill, Stephen Eyre, Audrey Spiro, Marc J. Swartz, and Ying-hsiung Chou (Zhōu Yīnxióng 周英雄) for their advice at various stages of the development of the MS and to Walter Slote and other participants in the Korean symposium.

<sup>2</sup>- Xiào dāng jiélì, zhōng zé jìn mìng. 孝當竭力，忠則盡命。

<sup>3</sup>- Zhōng 忠, xiào 孝, rén 仁 ài 愛, xìn 信 yì 義, hé 和, píng 平. (These are universally remembered in Taiwan today from north to south, following Taipei streets named after them.) The English glosses of these individual characters are more traditional than precise, but the semantic details do not concern us here, and I have retained them because they are better aides-mémoire than more innovative translations would be.

moral human behavior. “Of the hundred excellent things, filial piety is first,” says the proverb, and “In Chinese society, being unfilial to one’s parents is the thing most despised,” writes the native Christian missionary (Wú Shìfāng 1984:18). In the course of another study, Daniel Overmyer and I had occasion to review texts used or created by modern sectarian societies in Taiwan. Often such texts include passages like the following (all here quoted from Jordan & Overmyer 1986):

...even [such Buddhist terms as] purity and Nirvāna really arise from filial piety. Without filial piety, how could one obtain the fruits of Buddhahood? Thus, even the great monk of the western region, the Buddha Śākyamuni, was also totally filial toward his parents... [p. 56, revelation attributed to the Maitreya Buddha<sup>4</sup>]

...Filial sons and daughters enjoy Heaven; disobedient sons and daughters return to Purgatory. I warn you now: do not trifle with the kindness of your parents! [P. 62, revelation attributed to a sect patriarch<sup>5</sup>]

What does filial piety mean? It means obedience (shùn 順), that is, obeying one’s parents. Wherever one looks in the world, filial piety is at the beginning of things; it is the first principle of all conduct. For people to lack filial piety is like a stream having no source, and thus being sure to dry up... [P. 69, from a 1973 revelation attributed to the god Guān Gōng 關公]

Although these examples are from sectarian materials, the same themes emerge from proverbs, newspaper editorials, PTA meetings, university symposia, and village catcalls. The popular view, in other words, is that concern with filial piety is the most conspicuous feature of the Chinese moral system, and hence at the center of Chinese behavior and ideals. The importance attributed; to filiality by Chinese creates its importance for an analytical understanding of Chinese culture. The first part of this paper explores filial piety as it is popularly understood by my Taiwan informants. The second part examines the prime late Classical popular text used to inculcate filial piety in children: a modest set of popular tales called the “Twenty-four Filial Exemplars” (Èrshísì Xiào 二十四孝). The third part of the paper compares that text with later variants circulating in Taiwan to draw some conclusions about recent incipient changes in how filial piety is conceived.

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<sup>4</sup>-This passage is from “The Illustrated Book on Returning to the True Nature” (Fǎnxìng tú 返性圖), a mainland text of 1876. This and the following two texts are revelations by planchette (fújī 扶乩). See Jordan and Overmyer, 1986.

<sup>5</sup>-This passage is from the “Golden Basin of the Jade Dew” (Yùlù Jīnpán 玉露金盤), a text apparently first published in 1880 on the mainland, but now widely circulating among Taiwan sectarians.

## I: The Nature of Filial Piety

### A. Filial Obedience

The most salient feature of filial piety is the subordination of the will and welfare of each individual to the will and welfare of his or her real or classificatory parents. Psychiatrists Tzeng Wen-hsing & Hsu Jing (1972: 28) write:

The virtue of filial piety, as understood by the Chinese, consists of several qualities, including unquestioning obedience to the parents and concern for and understanding of their needs and wishes with the intention of pleasing and comforting them. This relationship which begins between the child and his own parents is eventually extended to his relations with all authority.

Filial piety is quintessentially described as the subordination of a son to his father, but filial piety should also characterize the emotions of a son toward his mother, of a daughter towards her parents, and of a daughter-in-law towards her husband's parents. Stepmothers should be objects of filial attention as much as natural mothers.<sup>6</sup> Filial feelings should also be experienced and filial behavior exhibited towards grandparents, great grandparents, and all higher lineal ancestors, living or dead. For women, filiality is focused on her husband's lineal ascendants, but not entirely removed from her own.<sup>7</sup> Parental feelings and behavior toward children are described as being preferentially "stern and dignified" (yán 嚴) in the case of an ideal father, "gentle and compassionate" (cí 慈) in the case of an ideal mother. These sensitivities and associated behaviors are considered to be inherent characteristics of a person acting in his or her status as parent or child, however; the failure of a mother to be "gentle and compassionate" in no way diminishes a child's obligation to be filial, and a wayward child's lack of filiality does not mean that a virtuous parent will not still exhibit sternness or compassion.

Francis Hsu speaks of the "filial obligation," which he describes this way (Hsu 1970: 78f):

...their most important cultural ideal [was] that support of the parents came before all other obligations and that this obligation must be fulfilled even at the expense of the children.

Economic support is not, however, the only way in which Chinese children are obligated to their parents. The son not only has to follow the Confucian dictum that "parents are always right," but at all times and in all circumstances he must try to satisfy their wishes and look after their safety. If the parents are indisposed, the son should spare no trouble in obtaining a cure for them. Formerly, if a parent was sentenced to prison, the son might arrange to take that parent's place. If

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<sup>6</sup>The strongly unilinear character of Chinese society excludes stepfathers from cultural recognition. I have no data on the rare cases that must occasionally occur anyway.

<sup>7</sup>Analogous kinds of subordination and respect are offered to teachers, elder siblings, and public officials, but they are only analogous, not identical, and have different names in Chinese.

the parents were displeased with their daughter-in-law, the good son did not hesitate to think about divorce. In the service of the elders, no effort was too extraordinary or too great. In addition to parents the elders in question could be a man's stepmother or a woman's parents-in-law.

It is not quite the case that Confucianism maintains that “parents are always right.” Classical Chinese thought elaborates the notion of filiality by the additional term “remonstrance” (jiàn 諫 or jiànzhēng 諫諍). Remonstrance refers to the duty of a child (or any jural subordinate) to attempt to dissuade his parent (or any jural superior) from a patently impractical or immoral course of action. Thus, it is reasoned, filiality is not mere obedience, but exhibits a broader and more genuine concern with the parent's welfare than mere obedience would suggest. Having remonstrated, the model son or daughter in the end must obey the will of a determined parent. This obligation is sanctioned by an oft-cited passage in the Analects (IV:18), which reads:

When serving parents, a son may remonstrate with them mildly, but if he sees that they are determined, he is even more respectful and does not resist them, doing the painful work without complaint.<sup>8</sup>

As a practical matter, remonstrance is of course a daily occurrence in family life. In popular thinking about filial piety, however, remonstrance is rarely considered. What parents seek from their children is obedience, not remonstrance; and what moral heroes are heroes about is obeying, not remonstrating.

## B. Filial Nurturance

Beyond obedience to parental will is sustenance of parental welfare. The two are terminologically distinguished, for xiàoshùn 孝順 (Hokkien: hàu-sūn) is a stative and transitive verb meaning “to show filial obedience [to].” (In Hokkien it is also a noun naming that obedience.) In contrast, nurturance of a parent is yàng. It is in the nature of things that obedience dominates when the filial child is indeed a child, while nurturance dominates when the filial child is an adult, and the parent, aging and increasingly dependent. Still, both obedience and nurturance are part of the picture all along. In popular thinking, the nurturance is thought of almost exactly as the nurturance offered to a child. (Mandarin speaking purists pronounce the same graph yǎng when it refers to nurturing a child or animal, but pronounce it yàng when the nurturance is offered to an aged parent. Few speakers seem to observe the distinction in practice.<sup>9</sup>)

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<sup>8</sup>-Shì fùmǔ jī jiàn; jiàn zhì, bù cóng, yòu jìng, bù wéi, lǎo ér bù yuàn. 事父母幾諫,見志不從,又敬,不違,勞而不怨。 Legge's influential translation in *The Chinese Classics* translates the passage somewhat differently (Legge 1893:170):

“In serving his parents, a son may remonstrate with them, but gently; when he sees that they do not incline to follow his advice, he shows an increased degree of reverence, but does not abandon his purpose; and should they punish him, he does not allow himself to murmur.”

This view of the remonstrating child as stubborn to the last is not confirmed by other translators or Chinese commentators I have read, who interpret the passage as I have translated it.

<sup>9</sup>-Mistakenly writing yǎng instead of yàng is the commonest mistake made by editors in the phonetic side-scripting in editions of the Twenty-four Exemplars. In colloquial Hokkien, cognates of yǎng are freely

Nurturance is most importantly symbolized by (1) feeding, (2) carrying, or (3) attending to the body processes of the nurtured individual, whether child or adult. (Less often entertaining the baby or parent is also described.) All of these kinds of caretaking are commonly administered to helpless children (although not exclusively by parents), and the element of reciprocity that is involved in adult children “payin’ for their raisin”<sup>10</sup> by administering them to helpless elderly parents is very self-conscious.

**Feeding.** Chinese informants speaking of nurturant aspects of being filial inevitably stress provision for the feeding of elderly people. In some cases, stories and anecdotes offered to illustrate the concept center on offering aging parents especially desirable food. In popular tales, the oral motif can take on a greater intensity when the nurturance of parents is concerned than when nurturing children is at issue (although in practice the difference is probably not as great). In popular stories, it is often medicine which must be prepared for an elderly parent, and many a moral tale focuses on medicine made with items that are difficult or impossible for the filial child to obtain. (Often these are not in fact part of the Chinese pharmacopœia.) This forces the exemplary filial child to extravagant self-sacrifice in quest of the rare ingredients. One of my informants recounted how her childhood death in an earlier incarnation (revealed to her in a local temple) had come about because she was exposed to chilling winter weather on an improbable quest for a kind of grass to heal her ill mother. The most popular account of the earthly life of the goddess Guānyīn 觀音 tells of her sacrificing her hands and eyes so that they can be made into medicine for her disagreeable but ailing father. And stories abound throughout China of people cutting off their own flesh to feed their parents.

**Self-Sacrifice.** The extent of sacrifice is effectively limited only by the death of the child. One type of story (one which does *not* figure in any of the Filial Exemplar tales to be discussed here) involves the child offering his own body for literal cannibalization by the parent. Francis Hsu provides an example (1970:79):

In the district histories and genealogical records to be found in every part of the country are many individual biographies of local notables. After a cursory reading of about fifty of them, I obtained at least five instances in which men and women were said to have sliced flesh from their arms to be boiled in the medicine pot of one or another of their parents. One man did this twice during one of his father’s illnesses. Because the elder’s condition remained serious, the filial son decided to take a more drastic course of action. He cut out a piece of

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used for both, although Hokkien literary (Hànwén 漢文) readings exist for the specialized sense of nurturing parents. The Hokkien colloquial words are, depending upon dialect, iáng or ióng (formal) and iú<sup>n</sup> (informal) for Mandarin yǎng; iāng, and literary iāng or iōng for Mandarin yàng. A possible survival of the “lower going-tone” reading may survive in the homonymous verb iāng, meaning “to carry (a person) on one’s back” (no standard writing) which is used both of children and of adults carried on the back.

<sup>10</sup>-The American folk expression “payin’ for his raisin” refers of course to tending the infantile needs of the next generation. It would be inconceivable in American English to use it to refer to tending elderly parents. In the Chinese context, in contrast, that is the only way in which nurturance is seen as reciprocal. Ideologically, Ego’s reciprocal relationship with his parents is quite separate from the reciprocal relationship he undertakes with his own children. Psychologically, that differentiation is more ambiguous, as we shall see.

what he thought was his “liver” instead. Both he and his father died shortly afterward.

### C. Filial Piety as Duty and as Emotion

Filial piety is simultaneously (and ambiguously) both a mental state and a behavioral code, and the behavioral code is (also simultaneously and also ambiguously) both a set of actions and a system of values underlying those actions. Thus we find that for Chinese informants filial piety may be defined in three quite separate ways: (1) Informants describe filiality as action directed toward a parent and exhibiting submission and nurturance. (2) Informants often experience filiality as an emotion of love toward a parent that is understood to differ from other sorts of attachment. (Filial piety as emotion is particularly vivid in the context of funerals, which provide strong cultural support for this interpretation of a mourning child’s affect.) (3) Informants attempt to instill filiality in children as part of a system of values, which must be self-consciously cultivated. Some informants (“traditionalists,” I shall argue), see that system as cosmologically inevitable; others (“modernists,” by contrast) appear to see it as a cultural convention of a distinctively Chinese cultural tradition, and therefore in the end arbitrary rather than inevitable.<sup>11</sup>

### D. Filial Piety and Frustration

In his excellent sketch of Chinese modal personality, Richard Solomon (1971) explores the psychodynamics of a much over-determined Chinese “desire to find pleasure and security by being cared for by others” (p. 40), partly engendered by “considerable anxiety about disobeying ... [parental] instructions” (p.52). Part of “growing up” involves learning to curb this passive dependency and to structure its expression into culturally acceptable channels, preferably at as little psychic cost as possible. In view of Solomon’s discussion, it is easy to see why Chinese parents should find filial piety comfortable, but the same considerations should make it particularly *un*-comfortable to be a filial child, however much well socialized adults may deny that this is so.<sup>12</sup>

What reduces the psychic cost? Without attempting here to develop a full-blown theory of Chinese personality (and therefore without aspiring to answer that question completely), I suggest that certain associated behaviors and beliefs seem to be to be

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<sup>11</sup>-On the one hand, the Confucian system asserts the naturalness and inevitability of virtuous sentiments. On the other hand, it argues for one’s obligation to cultivate them self-consciously throughout one’s life if one is to experience them “properly,” since they do not occur by themselves. This ambiguity is pervasive in Confucianism, and filiality partakes of it. If I have understood the matter accurately, it is just this unnaturalness of what is claimed to be nature that provided the entering wedge for traditional Taoist opposition to Confucianism as philosophy.

<sup>12</sup>-It is difficult to distinguish gracefully in either English or Chinese between the two senses of “child” as “offspring” and as “immature person.” In the ideology of filial piety, there is, of course, no difference. Psychodynamically the picture is probably more complicated than that. In the next few paragraphs it is the adult “child” that I principally have in mind, for it is to the middle-aged, not the very young, that care of the elderly normally falls. The cultural system, however, emphasizes that the situation is identical and the obligation constant.

directed in part toward mitigating that potential discomfort: identification of the individual with the parent, and identification of the individual with the family as a whole.

**Identification with the Parent.** If we accept Solomon's view that Chinese find "pleasure and security by being cared for by others," we must imagine it to be even more painful to provide this nurturance to those very individuals who were formerly the source of it.<sup>13</sup> One way in which this pain may be mitigated for Chinese informants is the tendency to identify with parents. By this I do not refer to a kind of "identification with the aggressor" (although there may be an element of that). I mean instead that in some contexts cultural sanction is granted to blurring the boundaries between ego and his parent<sup>14</sup>. One way this is done is by stressing that ego can occupy the same status with respect to his children that his parents occupy with respect to him, that he himself is in other words, at least potentially a parent even as he is a child. Chinese informants are quite explicit about a kind of continuity, if not exactly reciprocity, implicit in filial subordination. The concern with obedience and nurturance makes filial piety a guide for behavior (and for the experience of emotion) regardless of the absolute ages of parent and child, and as such it is easy to see the parent whom one serves today as the self who is served tomorrow. Psychological interdependence of parent and child, with strong cultural approval, has been remarked on by some observers as standing in contrast to Euroamerican concern with the development of "autonomy" as a crucial feature of maturity. Yet psychological cross-identification seems to me also to be a prime psychological resource for an individual embedded in a cultural system that exalts highly asymmetrical filial piety.

Chinese informants stress filial piety as related to the statuses more than to the personalities of their parents. A child honors its father because he is a father, whether or not he is by any other criterion a worthy person. The duties and benefits of filial piety, like the manipulation and benefits of geomancy, are unrelated to personality. Depersonalization of the obligation may be related merely to the abstraction inherent in its being a self-consciously held general cultural value. Then again, it may be harmonic with ego's sense of participation on both sides of the arrangement so that, in a sense, it is cognitively irrelevant exactly who it is that is making sacrifices for whom.

**Individual and Family.** In the name of filiality, quite general family interests are often promoted, occasionally at the expense of the broader commonweal, and filiality becomes equivalent to legitimated, family-centered particularism. I have argued in quite a different context that the essential unit of Chinese popular religion in Taiwan is the family, not the individual. It may be the individual who suffers illness, loses money, or fails in school, but it is the family that must seek divine assistance for *its* misfortune in that case (Jordan 1972:92-93). The emphatically corporate character of the Chinese family, within which there are not even property rights and outside which there is no security, militates in favor of the welfare of adults being easily identifiable with the welfare of all members of the group.

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<sup>13</sup>-This would not be so if nurturance could be aggressively construed, but for Chinese that seems rare, at least in this context.

<sup>14</sup>-Intergenerational role continuity may make this functional in any pre-modern society. If so, the longevity of the Chinese adaptation makes its presence in China unsurprising in evolutionary perspective.



When this is taken to its logical conclusion, it can be (and frequently is) reasoned that parental welfare depends upon family condition, and family condition depends upon a broad base of family welfare (especially money); hence anything which advances the family advances the well-being of one's parents. Ego, however, is also a beneficiary of his contributions to the general welfare of the family. Thus filiality, while it represents self-sacrifice at the individual level, can legitimate vigorously forwarding one's own interests at the family level, which can be very self-interested indeed. Although ideology stresses the self-sacrifice of the individual actor in filiality, the actor who is able to identify his self-interest with corporate interest need experience less sense of deprivation than one who sees them as separate.<sup>15</sup>

In its extreme form, this logic of filial piety can even be made to rationalize nepotism, corruption, and other antisocial tendencies, so long as the family thrives from it. Chinese theories of government, proceeding from Chinese theories of ethics, accord filiality, and therefore also familistic particularism, not only a great deal of social legitimacy, but even supreme legitimacy. (Hence provisions in the legal codes of various dynasties against court testimony against family members, or providing heavy punishments for even speaking harshly to a parent.) In doing so, they set the stage for a continuing, strongly experienced, but largely unspoken tension. Despite millennia of ingenious philosophical effort to represent the non-familial virtues of loyalty (zhōng 忠) and benevolence (rén 仁) as the consequences of filiality (and vice versa), the tension remains latent not far below the level of consciousness of most Chinese, and presents one of the most interesting and persistent ideological issues in Chinese society. Lin Yutang has stated this quite emphatically (Lin 1968: 180):

There is nothing wrong in all this [Confucianism]. Its only weakness was the mixing of politics with morals. The consequences are fairly satisfactory for the family, but disastrous for the state

Seen as a social system, it was consistent. It firmly believed that a nation of good brothers and good friends should make a good nation. Yet, seen in modern eyes, Confucianism omitted out of the social relationships man's social obligations toward the stranger, and great and catastrophic was the omission. Samaritan virtue was unknown and practically discouraged. ... The family, with its friends, became a walled castle, with the greatest communistic cooperation and mutual help within, but coldly indifferent toward, and fortified against, the world without. In the end, as it worked out, the family became a walled castle outside of which everything is legitimate loot.

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<sup>15</sup>It can even happen that an elderly parent is abused or ignored in the "filial" pursuit of "family" interest. In one case in my notes an old man in Tainán 臺南 was confined to a tiny room, on a different street from the rest of the family house/shop, to avoid his interfering with family advancement. The "unfilial" character of this "filiality" was not lost on the neighbors, who criticized the son for this treatment of his father.

## E. Conclusions (Part 1)

On the basis of a wide range of sources, but particularly comments of anthropological informants, it emerges (1) that filial piety is perceived as simultaneously behavior, moral code, and emotion, (2) that it was traditionally represented as an inevitable fact of nature rather than an arbitrary social convention, and (3) that it entailed both subordination of the individual to the desires or even whims of his or her parents (or husband's parents), and at the same time uncomplaining nurturance of those same parents. And we have seen that the psychological challenge of trying to feel nurturant toward individuals for whom one must also make sacrifices may be accomplished in part through identification with the recipient's status, and in part through the use filial piety as a rationalization for forwarding family interests that include ego's own. We turn now to the question of how such a view was socialized into children, with special reference to a text that seems to have been assigned an important role in the job.

## II: Education for Filial Piety: The Twenty-Four Exemplars

Since filial piety centers on self-sacrifice at the individual level, it is reflected in the education of children by conscious efforts to inculcate in the child (1) a strong sense of the inherent desirability of self-subordination (and a foretaste of the sanctions a group can exert against non-conformists) and (2) an exalted estimate of the inherent significance of the parents and their surrogates. Associated with this is a strong emphasis upon the cosmic inevitability of all of this. China's filial heroes rank with her military ones,<sup>16</sup> and both are self-consciously presented as especially appropriate models for children. This ideological education proceeds on a variety of fronts from earliest childhood, and is reinforced by constant explicit reference throughout an individual's life to filiality and the behaviors associated with filiality.

In traditional Chinese formal education, two texts in particular were devoted specifically to the instruction of children in the ways of filiality: the "Classic of Filial Piety" (Xiào Jīng 孝經), and the "Twenty-four Filial Exemplars" (Èrshísì Xiào 二十四孝). The "Classic of Filial Piety" has been part of the Confucian Canon since the Táng 唐 dynasty (618-906). The text itself probably dates from before the Hàn 漢 dynasty (206 B.C.-A.D.209), although the exact date and author are unknown.<sup>17</sup> The "Twenty-four Exemplars" is a much humbler text. By no means part of the Confucian Canon, its clumsy prose and curious stories are something of an embarrassment to many Chinese intellectuals, and apparently have been so for some centuries.

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<sup>16</sup>-This has been so since earliest times. For example, a Hàn 漢 dynasty lacquer-work box —the famed "Lèlàng Basket"— in the museum of Pyōngyang (formerly in the National Central Museum of Korea) includes representations of over ninety traditional heroes, including filial children (among them Dīng Lán 丁蘭, tale #22 in the usual ordering). (Lèlàng 樂浪 [Korean: Nangnang] was a commandery established around the Pyōngyáng area during the Hàn period occupation.)

<sup>17</sup>-The "Classic of Filial Piety" is traditionally attributed to Zēng Shēn 曾參 (Zēng zǐ 曾子, 505-436? B.C.), a disciple of Confucius especially noted for his filial piety (and himself one of the twenty-four filial exemplars!). Other, less common, traditional attributions include Confucius himself and his grandson (and Zēng Shēn's student) Kǒng Jí 孔伋 (Zǐsī 子思, 492-431 B.C.). For a modern English translation of the "Classic of Filial Piety," see Makra 1961.

The author of the “Twenty-four Exemplars” was Guō Jūjìng 郭居敬, a Yuán 元 dynasty (1260-1368) man who lived in Dàtián Xiàn 大田縣, north of Déhuà 德化, in Fújiàn 福建 province. The local gazetteer of that county tells us that he was much known for his filial piety and was inspired by the death of his father to collect and publish tales (and accompanied by poems) about twenty-four filial children from his own time back to the time of the legendary Emperor Shùn (Shùn dì 舜帝, traditionally 2255-2207 B.C.), a prime exemplar of the virtuous sovereign. (Zhāng Qíyún 1973: 14,621, §40338.125.) The collection was to serve as a model for children of all stations to encourage them in filial behavior. The work was apparently well received from the beginning. Guō was proposed for high office from time to time (although he did not accept it), and in later years other authors produced closely similar collections,<sup>18</sup> and “Twenty-four Exemplars” thus gradually evolved from a specific literary work to a literary genre.

### A. The Twenty-Four Exemplars in Taiwan

In modern Taiwan, as presumably throughout China in recent centuries, countless reprints of Guō’s classic are being constantly published, sometimes translated into modern Chinese or expanded into prolix retellings<sup>19</sup>, sometimes merely reprinted with commentaries (ranging from homily to *explication de texte*), and nearly always with illustrations. Some are published by individuals and distributed free or at cost by individuals as acts of merit; others are published by sectarian societies; others yet are published by reputable presses. Given the association of the text with the education of children, most Taiwan editions feature sidescripted pronunciation of each character, using the National Phonetic Alphabet. I do not believe I have ever visited a Taiwan bookstore that did not offer copies of the Twenty-four Exemplars, but just to be certain I made a quick survey of a dozen bookstores in as many different districts of Taipei city in 1985. As expected, it revealed at least one edition for sale in every shop, and usually more than one.

Illustrations of the stories of the “Twenty-four Exemplars” are a frequent, yea nearly inevitable, decorative motif for the painting of temples, and almost any temple will display over its front door Shùn 舜 plowing for his disagreeable sire, assisted by merciful birds and elephants (tale #1 in the appendix), or hunters encountering Tán 獐, who, dressed as a deer, is surprised in the improbable act of milking wild deer to feed his elderly parents (#7). Such illustrations are not limited to temples either. Recent fashion in graves includes glazed tiles portraying these same stories. Of twenty-three randomly selected graves in three sections of the Consummate Joy (Jílè 極樂) Cemetery in Taipei,

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<sup>18</sup>-Some of these are listed in Zhāng Qíyún 1973: 564 §250.57. It is not clear to me that no-one preceded Guō in making a collection of twenty-four exemplars. Filial heroes are mixed with other heroes in texts and artwork dating back to the Hàn 漢 dynasty, and the stories he selected do not make their first appearances in his collection. However, at the time of this writing, I do not have clear knowledge of any earlier collection of the same name, let alone quite the same content.

<sup>19</sup>-Careful comparison convinces me that these expanded versions rarely change the thrust of the original story. Rather they bring it into line with modern conventions for children’s literature. The only striking but partial exception is the story of Dīng Lán 丁蘭 (#22 in the appendix).

six —about a quarter— were decorated with plaques showing scenes from the “Twenty-four Exemplars.”<sup>20</sup>

## B. Objections

Enthusiasm for Guō Jūjìng’s work is not universal. For one thing, most children, while exposed to the stories, do not seem to find them very interesting. As common as regular bookstores in Taiwan are store-front rental libraries, where children congregate for pleasure reading, for which they pay an hourly fee. Even as twelve randomly chosen bookstores all had copies of the Twenty-four Exemplars, so *none* of the twelve rental libraries queried stocked editions of the work. Children, it was explained, never asked for it.

Another hostile audience is made up of a large proportion of Chinese intellectuals, at least in the late twentieth century. I mentioned to one of the Chinese literature instructors at the Inter-University Program in Taipei that I sometimes opened my freshman class on Chinese culture by asking students to read a translation of the “Twenty-four Exemplars.” She fairly shrieked her outrage. “That is a terrible book that we all oppose,” she told me. The reason, she went on to say, was that the stories were a “perversion of the true meaning of filial piety.” In the tale of Wú Měng 吳猛 refraining from brushing away mosquitoes lest they bite his parents (#11), she found no vital symbol of filiality in any positive sense, but saw only morbid masochism. To an outsider, as to a peasant, filiality indeed has its masochistic side. To a Taipei teacher of literature, that is not a pleasant way of putting it.

Foreigners too have tended not to take the “Twenty-four Exemplars” seriously. When Richard Solomon included it in his analysis of Chinese national character in the opening section of *Mao’s Revolution and the Chinese Political Culture* (Solomon 1971), Frederick Mote sharply condemned the use in serious scholarly writing of “such carnival side-shows of the historic Chinese spectacle as the Twenty-four Exemplars of Filial Conduct” (Mote 1972). And translations into western languages are rare.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>Nine graves in the full sample of thirty-two were omitted because they antedated the earliest decorated grave. Since it was my impression that this kind of decoration had become more fashionable recently, use of older graves would of course have tended to dilute legitimate evidence of current popularity. I did not do formal counts among southern graves, but my general impression is that the motifs are even commoner among the Hokkien-speaking population and in southern Taiwan. The Consummate Joy Cemetery includes a large proportion of graves of recent mainland immigrants, and thus represents a biased sample of Taiwan society with respect to education and social class as well, which should also depress the proportion of graves with this folk motif.

<sup>21</sup>Not counting a translation into uncertain English published in Taiwan (Liú Kèhuán 1974), the only English translation I have found, somewhat quaintly rendered, was anonymously offered in the 1837 volume of the *Chinese Repository*; a slightly revised version of it (including commentaries) appears as an appendix to Ivan Chen’s translation of the “Classic of Filial Piety” (Chen 1908). Chen modified one tale and omitted two of them (those of Yǔ Qiánlóu 庾黔婁, who tasted his sick father’s dung in the course of diagnosis [#16] and of Madame Táng 唐夫人, who fed her toothless mother-in-law from her own breast [#10]) as unfit for the sensitive eyes of English readers.

### C. Variant Editions

In some sense, even the amplification and imitation of the “Twenty-four Exemplars” represent dissatisfaction with it. Amplifications are offered, after all, for texts that are unclear, incomplete, or in need of corrective discussion. And imitation occurs partly at least out of a feeling that some filial exemplars that ought to be offered for public inspiration have been left out. Guiding editorial principles are not discussed in most of the Taiwan variants and imitations —the books are mostly intended for children, after all. An important exception is the book of *Thirty-six Exemplars of Filial Piety*, by Wú Yánhuán 吳延環, a member of the Legislative Yuàn and columnist for the Central Daily News (Zhōngyāng Rìbào 中央日報), organ of the Nationalist Party. In his introduction, Mr. Wú explains (1) that he has sought to include only historically authenticated individuals for whom he can include reference to specific passages in the standard works of Chinese history, (2) that he has excluded tales that depend upon any supernatural element (with one exception<sup>22</sup>), (3) that he sought to include more female protagonists, as well as a wider range of kinship relations (grandchildren-grandparents, adopted children, children-in-law-parents-in-law, etc.), (4) that he wanted to include exemplars from Taiwan and Jīnmén 金門 (Quemoy), and so on. In other words, Mr. Wú found both the scope of kinship and the level of scholarship represented by the original too limited for modern Taiwan, and his attractive selection of tales is much the most sophisticated in my collection (although, I shall argue, iconically the least effective).

The continuing viability of the original “Twenty-four Exemplars,” as much as the continuing attempts to improve on it, suggests that it strikes an important chord in the Chinese popular imagination, that its images remain vibrant. If the attempts to update it suggest a view that it is in some ways incomplete, they also suggest that it is possible to generalize its message past the cases that make it up and to find other filial people in history. Both that possibility and the motivation to carry out the task reinforce the message of the original book that *filiality is a possible human accomplishment that can properly be a behavioral goal for anyone*.

With this background, we are ready to turn to the nature of the tales themselves, and to the differences between the Yuán dynasty collection of Guō Jūjìng and its modern variants and imitators. Indeed, these differences may tell us something about how, if at all, filial piety is either differently conceptualized or differently symbolized (or both) in contemporary Taiwan as against the world of Guō Jūjìng.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>-The exception is Emperor Shùn (#1), whom he feels he must include because Confucius himself regarded Shùn as a filial exemplar, and Confucius, also included, is hardly to be overruled.

<sup>23</sup>-Guō Jūjìng, we remember, was from Fújiàn, the same province from which the ancestors of most people in modern Taiwan emigrated. In addition to the role of the “Twenty-four Exemplars” in China’s national culture, it also has continuous significance as part of Fujianese (Mǐn 閩) *local* tradition. This is of course invisible in printed texts, but becomes more evident in vernacular performances of the tales, rhymed and sung by minstrels in traditional Fujianese styles, such as “songs to improve the world” (quànshì gē 勸世歌). One modern manifestation of this tradition is the production of records and tapes of such performances. The “Twenty-four Exemplars” figure in most publishers’ collections.

## D. Exemplary Filiality

Tzeng & Hsu (1972: 29) have briefly described and analyzed the “Twenty-four Exemplars” as follows:

The largest group (seven stories) deals with how the child, the son except for one daughter-in-law, obtains food for the mother. In five instances the mother is sick and a special food is required for her recovery. A typical story of this kind *Lying on the Ice to Catch Fish* [Wò Bīng Qiú Lǐ 臥冰求鯉 #12]) concerns a stepmother and her stepson. The stepmother became sick during the winter and only a certain kind of fresh fish would effect a cure. The stepson, even though he had been badly treated by her, lay on the ice so that the warmth of his body would melt a hole through which he could catch the fish. The right kind of fish appeared and she recovered. The stepson was rewarded by a change in his stepmother’s behavior toward him. There are several other stories with similar themes. A boy in wintertime needed fresh bamboo shoots for his mother. He wept in a bamboo grove and miraculously bamboo shoots came up. [#23] ... It is interesting that all of these stories of the relationship between mother and son concern food, and it is the young one who feeds the older one.

The second largest group (five stories) concerns middle-aged sons who have attained high rank and who continue to show their filial piety by maintaining a close relationship with their mothers, as shown by intimate body care, cleaning the toilet [#24], tasting stool for medical diagnosis [#16], or tasting medicine [#2]. ...

In the third group (four stories) a young son endures physical suffering for an aged parent. One son warmed his father’s bed in winter with his own body [#19] and another exposed his body to mosquito bites in summer to protect his father [#11]. One son rescued his father from attack by a tiger [#14] and one sold himself into slavery in order to bury his father [#6]. From a Western point of view, these sons serve their fathers in a masochistic way.

Two stories deal with how a child comforts or entertains his parents. ...

In two other stories, a son, confronted with a choice between his parents and his child or his wife, chooses in favor of the parent. ...

Two stories show how a young man works very hard to support his parents, while another story describes how a son endured mistreatment from his stepmother who denied him warm clothing in wintertime. When his father discovered the situation the son begged forgiveness for his stepmother, who rewarded him with kinder treatment [#4].

In their brief analysis, Tzeng & Hsu observe that filial piety is expected to develop in a child from about the age of three or four, and that explicitly filial acts are expected to continue throughout life, “even after the child becomes a parent himself” (p. 29).

Providing food or other nurturance to the parent in a way reminiscent of the way in which a parent would provide nurturance to a child “is understood in Chinese culture as a way to maintain the early relationship,” they argue (p. 29):

The extremely close and prolonged relationships between son and mother may appear pathological to a Western psychiatrist. In most cases, this close relationship is considered virtuous in Chinese culture and is not highly sexualized. It is usually approved of rather than objected to by the father and seldom emerges an overt triangular conflict. Occasionally, the relationship becomes pathological when there is physical closeness between adolescent boy and his mother, but even this is not so severe as similar situations in the West, and is often tolerated by society.

Their article continues by analyzing other Chinese children’s literature and concludes that triangular conflict within the family, particularly of a recognizably Oedipal character, is rare in China,<sup>24</sup> a point I will not pursue here.

## E. Conclusions (Part 2)

The “Twenty-four Exemplars” is of interest to the student of Chinese society because of its widespread popular use and the respect which it has gained as a document of popular morality directed particularly to children. Equally of interest are the attempts to “reform” the document by selecting a different set of tales for inclusion. Brief analysis of the original tales themselves clearly shows the motifs of nurturance and self-sacrifice discussed earlier in connection with the abstract discussion of filial piety, as well as iconic symbols of those, such as feeding, carrying, bowing before parents, or injuring one’s body or prestige for the benefit of one’s parents. A particularly strong mother-son tie seems to emerge, and the duties of a woman to her husband’s parents come through clearly.

## III: Modernization(?) of Filiality

What is the picture of filial piety that is presented by the revisionist editions of Guō Jūjīng’s work? In order to attempt to answer this question, I have tried to isolate features of the stories that can be “coded” more or less mechanically across all stories in the original corpus, and I have made these codings both on that corpus and on the more modern collections of tales. This section will depend upon the results of these codings.

Because the original stories rarely exceed half a dozen sentences in length (excluding associated verses, which I have ignored), the possibilities for coding are quite limited. In the end I selected five slightly different aspects of the tales:

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<sup>24</sup>.”The Oedipus complex is only one of the possible ways in which this tension [between wife and mother as viewed by a man] may be expressed. The Chinese pattern acknowledges the life-long attachment between mother and son as a threat to the father, but, because of the great Chinese regard for older generations, any excess is more likely to result in the son rather than the father becoming the victim. This solution is more consistent with stress on filial piety than the usual Western one would be.” (P. 29)

- a. Sex of the protagonist
- b. Kinsman toward whom filiality is expressed
- c. The occurrence of a natural or social miracle
- d. Period in which protagonist is said to have lived
- e. Age of the protagonist at the time of the story

## A. The Data Base

In order to examine the differences between the conceptualization of filial piety presented by the original “Twenty-four Exemplars” of Guō Jūjìng and those represented by the stories added in our own era, I assembled all the variant collections I could find in Taiwan. (These are listed in the bibliography.) In some cases the collections included thirty-six rather than twenty-four tales. One volume included seventy-two. When the same filial exemplar was discussed in different books, the language used was different except in exact reprints of the Yuán dynasty original, but, as noted earlier, there was virtually never a change in the elements I was coding, despite considerable expansion of the stories in some of the more verbose modern retellings.<sup>25</sup>

The data I report below are separated for three collections of tales, which, taken together, total 134 filial virtuosi. The three collections are designated Yuán, Qīng, and ROC.

Yuán refers to the original Twenty-four Filial Exemplars.

Qīng refers to the only volume in my Taiwan collection that clearly originates in the period between Yuán and the 1911 Revolution. The work in question is Wáng Jìnshēng’s 王晉升 “The Girls’ Illustrated Twenty-Four Examples of Filial Piety” (Nǚzǐ Èrshísìxiào Túshuō 女子二十四孝圖說). This work, which is privately reprinted in Taipei and has circulated free in temples, has a preface dated 1871, and another, specifically a second edition, dated 1894. It differs in several ways from the Yuán corpus (with which it has no stories in common), but most conspicuously in selecting only female protagonists. Although the volume is interesting (and idiosyncratic) in a number of ways, it is of marginal interest in understanding filiality in modern Taiwan. Indeed, the fact that only five of these are found in later collections suggests that they have not found a lasting audience, despite the availability of a new reprint. Qīng is included here largely because it suggests that the Taiwan additions are not the only direction the genre has taken. (Other stories of women faithful to

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<sup>25</sup>The only exception was the story of Zēng Shēn (#3). Some books follow Guō Jūjìng and recount an anecdote in which his mother, suddenly requiring his assistance, bites her finger. Zēng Shēn, at work in distant fields, feels pain because of his kinship connection with his mother is, after all, a flesh-and-blood one, and he hurries to her side. Some other books recount instead a tale of Zēng Shēn’s relationship with his father, based on a passage in the Confucian Canon in which Confucius provides a critique of Zēng’s behavior. These were coded as though two different exemplars were involved. The only book that included both stories in its account of Zēng Shēn was coded as having one additional story for this reason.



parents and to husbands' parents apparently also have been incorporated into "Twenty-four Exemplars" collections —cf. Matignon 1936:136— although they do not seem to be circulating widely in Taiwan.

ROC refers to all other collections, excluding tales that also occur in the Yuán collection, but including five tales that overlap with the Qīng corpus. Almost none of these tales themselves date from the Republican period, and many no doubt also could be found in earlier collections of filial tales. However in the modern period one has the choice of reprinting the Yuán corpus, reprinting a different corpus dating from a previous dynasty (as did the modern reprinter of Qīng items), or compiling a new collection (as Wú Yánhuán did), albeit from traditional stories. It is the new collections, taken together, that constitute my ROC corpus. The point of discounting their frequent Yuán overlaps is to highlight the difference with the Yuán corpus itself. There are ninety-one in this corpus, as against twenty-four each in Qīng and Yuán.<sup>26</sup> There are 134 filial heroes in total.

## B. The Personnel of Filial Piety

**Sex and Filial Piety.** All but one of the protagonists in the original Yuán collection are male. Traditional Chinese writers assumed male readers, and both writers and readers assumed male protagonists. (Similarly, the "Classic of Filial Piety" assumes a male readership and discusses only male filiality.) This is probably not the complete explanation, however. Of the 91 stories in the modern ROC corpus, only a dozen (13%) feature female protagonists, even though no-one would imagine that a modern Taiwan readership would be nearly ninety percent male. (And none of the authors or editors seem to be female.) Filial piety today, as traditionally (and in spite of the existence of all-girl collections like our Yuán corpus) seems to be most vividly men's business.

The same lack of focus on women does not emerge when we turn to the *objects* of filial attention, however. As they are clustered in the stories, here are the numbers (with percentages in parentheses):<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>-The particular books that were used in preparing the ROC codings are: Chén Zhàoqí 1983, Huà Yōng 1984, Lín Shùlíng et al. 1984, Xīnbīān 1984, Wú Yánhuán 1979. Most of the tales were originally coded by my research assistant, Mr. Tóng Chángyì 童長義 in Taipei in 1985. However the need to differentiate more variables and to include some additional volumes collected on earlier trips led me to review all of his codings myself. Such disagreement as there was could normally be attributed to clerical errors —there is nothing very ambiguous about most of the codes— so I regarded myself as the final authority on all codes.

<sup>27</sup>-Because the Qīng and ROC corpora overlap, the figures given in the "All" column are separately calculated and do not necessarily equal the sum of the corresponding figures in the other three columns.

Table 1; NUMBER OF STORIES WITH VARIOUS OBJECTS OF FILIAL PIETY

<u>Kinsman</u>	<u>Yuán</u>	<u>Qīng</u>	<u>ROC</u>	<u>All</u>
Mo	11 (46%)	7 (29%)	36 (39%)	53 (40%)
Fa & Mo	6 (25%)	0 (00%)	15 (16%)	22 (16%)
Fa	4 (17%)	6 (25%)	22 (24%)	29 (22%)
HuMo	1 (04%)	8 (33%)	2 (02%)	11 (08%)
SMo	1 (04%)	0 (00%)	1 (01%)	2 (01%)
Fa & SMo	1 (04%)	0 (00%)	4 (04%)	4 (03%)
FaMo	0 (00%)	0 (00%)	2 (02%)	2 (01%)
HuFa & HuMo	0 (00%)	1 (04%)	1 (01%)	2 (01%)
HuMo & HuFaMo	0 (00%)	1 (04%)	1 (01%)	1 (01%)
Other	0 (00%)	1 (04%)	7 (08%)	8 (06%)
Total	24 (100%)	24 (100%)	91 (100%)	134 (100%)

In general, although there is an increase in the range of kinsmen taken as objects of filial attention in the ROC corpus, the relative proportions of fathers and mothers stay surprisingly stable: There are a lot more mothers than fathers. The issue is clearer yet when we disaggregate the individual parents, allowing more than one object of filiality per story. The total number of kinsmen then climbs to 172, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: OBJECTS OF FILIAL PIETY TAKEN SEPARATELY

<u>Kinsman</u>	<u>Yuán</u>	<u>Qīng</u>	<u>ROC</u>	<u>All</u>
Mo	17 (58%)	7 (26%)	53 (45%)	77(45%)
Fa	11 (35%)	7 (26%)	44 (37%)	59 (35%)
HuMo	1 (03%)	10 (37%)	4 (03%)	14 (08%)
SMo	2 (03%)	0 (00%)	6 (05%)	8 (04%)
HuFa	0 (00%)	1 (04%)	2 (02%)	3 (02%)
FaMo	0 (00%)	0 (00%)	2 (02%)	2 (01%)
HuFaMo	0 (00%)	1 (04%)	1 (01%)	1 (01%)
EBr <sup>28</sup>	0 (00%)	1 (04%)	1 (01%)	2 (01%)
FaFa	0 (00%)	0 (00%)	2 (02%)	2 (01%)
FaFaFaFa	0 (00%)	0 (00%)	1 (01%)	1 (01%)
SFa	0 (00%)	0 (00%)	1 (01%)	1 (01%)
Fa's former Wi	0 (00%)	0 (00%)	1 (01%)	1 (01%)
Wetnurse	0 (00%)	0 (00%)	1 (01%)	1 (01%)
Total	31 (100%)	27 (100%)	119 (100%)	172 (100%)

The whole of the Yuán corpus is accounted for by filial acts toward four kintypes: mother, father, stepmother, and husband's mother. The ROC corpus, on the other hand, involves thirteen different kinship relationships. This is partly, perhaps, because it is so much larger, and partly because of modernizing efforts on the parts of some editors who have deliberately sought to cover a wider range of kinship relations. I shall argue that this wider range of kinship relationships is related to a shift in how filial piety is viewed by modern editors. Nevertheless, the ROC corpus is largely traditional for all that, since ninety percent of all its objects of filial attention still fall into the same four kintypes that accounted for the Yuán collection.

<sup>28</sup>The virtue practiced (and emotion experienced) by a younger sibling toward an older brother is *tì* 悌, not *xiào* 孝. The conceptualization is similar, however, which may account for two tales of obedience and loyalty to an older brother finding their way into our collection.

In practice, filial piety is expected from children of both sexes towards parents of both sexes. In addition, a woman is expected to exemplify filial behavior toward her husband's parents. To the extent that there may be conflicts in the demands made on her by the two sets of parents, it is her husband's parents who must be given pride of place, as is evidenced most vividly in the all-girl Qīng corpus, where husband's mothers figure more prominently than mothers do.

Briefly put, then, our stories present us with more filial boys than filial girls, but more mothers than fathers. When the filial child does happen to be female, the person to whom she is filial is still more usually a mother than a father.<sup>29</sup> Because of the strong rules of patriliney and virilocality in China, the "mother" in question is often a husband's mother.

It normally comes as a mild surprise to Chinese informants when I point out the large number of mothers as against fathers in the "Twenty-four Exemplars" and its imitators. Although the fact is readily acknowledged when the evidence is presented, most Chinese do not seem to think of it that way. Filial piety is represented in the "Classic of Filial Piety" and the older works of the Confucian canon in an all-male idiom; why then should popular stories circulating with didactic intent tend to stress the obligations of both sexes of children toward older women?

One approach would be to argue that the tales are designed to provide moral examples, and therefore we would predict that they would focus especially upon relationships that are inherently painful and problematic. In the case of tales of a woman's obligations toward her husband's mother, this logic seems to make sense. On the other hand, we can argue that the stories have simple entertainment value as well. In that case, we should expect to see in them expressions of the relationship where it is most heartfelt. In the case of male protagonists being filial towards their mothers, it is easy to accept this view. Unfortunately, the two lines of argument are not only different, but even contradictory. I suggest that the reason may lie in the authors and compilers of these volumes, who are men, and who may tend to exemplify the filial piety of men and boys by means of the emotionally satisfying mother-son relationship, where filial piety "comes easy," rather than of the more tense, authority related father-son relationship. But they exemplify filial piety for girls and women in an area where they feel strong moral examples are most needed, which popular opinion and sociological analysis agree is the troublesome area of relations between husband's mother and son's wife.

**Filiality Toward Non-Parents.** I noted the extension of filial piety in the ROC stories to a wider range of kinsmen than were represented in the earlier corpora. This suggests a shift in the conception of the tales themselves. The Yuán collection is limited to people to whom there is no doubt whatever that filial piety is clearly owed. Mother and father are the prime recipients. Since a woman transfers her allegiance at marriage, husband's mother is also included. The inclusion of stepmother, in a society where stepmothers have approximately the same folkloric valence as they do among English

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<sup>29</sup>In the ROC corpus, there is a slightly greater tendency for female protagonists to be filial to male objects (6 tales out of 10), than for male protagonists to be (19 tales out of 59), but it is not statistically very significant ( $p < 0.1$ ), and the correlation does not hold if one includes the data from the Qīng and Yuán collections.

speakers, stresses that filial piety is a duty which is owed regardless of how unworthy the recipient of filial attention may be. The inclusion in the ROC stories of a beloved wet-nurse, however, suggests that the modern editor may tend to see filial piety at least part of the time as an emotion, rather than as a duty. As an emotion, it is readily extended to anyone whose behavior toward the filial child has been “parental,” while as a duty it is strictly appropriate only to people in the formal status of parent (or husband’s parent). The wet-nurse (and to a lesser degree the father’s former wife and the older brothers) in the later collections clearly extend filial piety beyond the strictly bounded realm in which it is jurally appropriate. The tendency is not obtrusive in the ROC corpus, but it is far commoner than in either of the earlier corpora. The importance of this is that filial piety as an emotion assumes a voluntary character that it lacks as a duty, and as this happens, it loses its quality as a feature of the cosmos. This interesting shift is only prefigured in ROC personnel. The point is clearer when we turn to miracles.

### C. Miracles

Another feature of interest in the original “Twenty-four Exemplars,” as in many other popular Chinese stories, is the responsiveness of the non-human world to the moral actions of human beings. Chinese popular thought (as manifested in folktales, sectarian society revelations, and the like) holds that the virtues extolled by classical sages —the “eight virtues” we spoke of earlier, for example— are no mere products of a social contract, but are of more cosmic proportions and character: inevitable and eternal behavioral codes articulated by Chinese sages but inherent in the Nature of Things and relevant to all people in all times and places. Thus, although Chinese descriptions of filial piety may make it seem extreme in comparative ethnographic perspective, it is a universal foundation stone of all civilized society as viewed from within the traditional(istic) Chinese world. In the “Twenty-four Exemplars,” this is demonstrated by the tendency of the world, both human and non-human, to be responsive to filial acts, and dramatically responsive to extravagant filial acts. In later stories, however, the miraculous side of filiality is discounted, and filiality is more often represented as proceeding from a protagonist’s mastery of cultural convention, rather than from his inevitable cosmic duty.

In coding miracles in the stories, I have distinguished between “social miracles” and “natural miracles,” i.e., between those which do and do not involve human beings as primary responders. A natural miracle is one in which a supernatural being appears, or one in which, as a result of a filial act by a human being, the cosmos rewards him by a clear violation of the usual order of things. Here is the full text of the tale of Mèng Zōng 孟宗 mentioned earlier (#23), one of the most popular in the Yuán corpus:

Mèng Zōng 孟宗 of the Three Kingdoms period was also called Gōngwǔ 恭武. His father died when he was small, and his mother was very ill. One winter she longed to eat a soup made with boiled bamboo shoots. Zōng had no means to give her such a thing, and he went out to the bamboo grove where, seizing a bamboo stalk, he wept. His filial piety moved heaven and earth. In a moment, the earth cracked open and many stalks of bamboo shoots appeared. He gathered them and returned home to make soup for his mother. When she had eaten it, she recovered.

We are presented here with two miracles: the bamboo that rewards the suffering of a truly filial heart with shoots out of season, and the healing power of the shoots, elevated as they are beyond everyday table fare by the filial nature of the son who has procured and prepared them. Such tales iconically encapsulate the message that the whole cosmos supports the value of filial piety. They contribute to giving filial piety an inevitability and desirability quite beyond what it would have as mere social convention.<sup>30</sup> One is not filial because it is a way to express naturally occurring filial sentiments, then, but rather one has an obligation to be filial because the universe says so (or, to take a more “Taoist” view, one is filial because filial action accords with the true nature of things and is the path of least resistance in the fully lived life). Such natural miracles occur in 38% of the tales of the Yuán corpus, and in 50% of the Qīng tales.<sup>31</sup> In the ROC collection, however, only 9% of the stories include natural miracles.

In large part, this absence of cosmic reference seems to be a product of deliberate demythologizing. Indeed, Wú Yánhuán states quite explicitly that he has deliberately omitted all mention of miracles in the interests of historical accuracy and the “credibility” of the models.<sup>32</sup> And anthropologist Lǐ Yìyuán, in a popular article on filial piety in the modern era and how to promote it, even argues that didactic tales should be imitable and homey and devoid of supernatural or extravagant elements, lest filiality seem unattainable, and children be unwilling to pursue it (Lǐ Yìyuán 1977:259)

In other words, modern editors tend to seek filial exemplars whose tales do not depend upon natural miracles. If I am right in arguing that such miracle tales underline the cosmic nature of filiality, it should follow that the modern tales are less able to inspire conviction of the inevitability of filial morality, despite the greater imitability or historical credibility of their protagonists. Filial piety, then becomes a system of action promoted as satisfying a natural emotion (an emotion that might be experienced toward anyone, not necessarily merely a parent), or it becomes a distinctively Chinese rule of etiquette. There is nothing untraditional or un-Confucian about satisfying emotions or the demands of etiquette; the point is that folk tradition anchored these rules of etiquette in universally valid principles of nature. Without the miracles, nature seems to lack moral concern, and moral concern hence lacks universality. It is here that we see a change. Here are my counts and percentages of natural and social miracles in the three corpora:<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>-Naturally there are also other features here worthy of consideration. Thus the common motif of nurturant feeding, noted earlier by Tseng & Hsu, is clearly also being presented as an inevitable feature both of filial piety and of healing. Similarly the withdrawal of the filial son to lament in solitude his inability to perform his duty is shared with other popular tales, and corresponds with a general Confucian dictum to the effect that a child should not display emotional distress before a parent.

<sup>31</sup>-In many of the Qīng stories, but not in the Yuán ones, supernatural beings appear with messages for filial children.

<sup>32</sup>-Wú Yánhuán writes that he reluctantly included Emperor Shùn (#1 in Yuán) because Confucius held him up as a filial exemplar on the basis of a popular miracle tale of that period.

<sup>33</sup>-The story of Emperor Shùn (#1 in the Yuán group), normally included in derivative collections but excluded from the ROC corpus as formally defined here, includes both a natural and a social miracle. (Because Shùn labored in the fields without complaining despite abusive parents, elephants and birds came to help him, and eventually the emperor came and, recognizing his virtue, chose him as successor.) For statistical purposes, I counted it as half a story in each miracle category.

Miracle	Yuán	Qīng	ROC
Natural	7.5 (31%)	12 (50%)	12 (12%)
Social	5.5 (23%)	2 (08%)	9 (11%)
None	11 (46%)	10 (42%)	70 (77%)

Has popular culture in Taiwan made this transition to demythologized, emotion- or etiquette-based filiality? Or are the editors who select demythologized tales peddling a kind of modernity that is somewhat out of step with popular thought. The question is too abstract for evidence to be easily identified.<sup>34</sup> One small bit of evidence, however, suggests that popular enthusiasm for the miraculous tales is greater than modern editors might imagine.<sup>35</sup> The survey of recent graves mentioned earlier included statistics on the frequency of individual Yuán stories —others are not used on graves. Although the sample is a very modest one, it clearly shows that both natural and social miracles are selected for representation on graves at no lower a frequency than their rate of representation in the Yuán corpus, indeed at a slightly higher frequency:

Miracle Type	Number of Yuán tales	Percent of Yuán tales	Number of grave tales	Percent of grave tales
Natural	8	33%	11	30%
Social	6	25%	12	33%
both	1	4%	4	11%
neither	9	38%	9	25%
Total	24	100%	36	100%

The grave panels, in other words, do not represent the same “modernizing” and demythologizing trend that is represented in the ROC tale corpus. To the extent that the selection of tales for inclusion in grave decoration may be related to how salient people feel them to be, there appears to be quite close continuity between this popular conception of filial piety and filial piety presented by the Yuán tales as a cosmic imperative. I did not collect statistical material on contemporary temple decoration, even though most new temples do include scenes from the Yuán collection, but my strong impression is that the correlation in the case of temples is even stronger than in the case of graves, with decorators deliberately selecting stories because of their miraculous content. The modernizing impulse of the editors of the ROC corpus, then, is probably somewhat out of harmony with at least one component of the public that appreciates this genre. Continuing the line of interpretation that sees these miracles as iconic, the conclusion would be that consumers of the tales, or anyway those users who take them seriously enough to use them as pious artistic motifs on graves and temples, are not (yet) involved in the

<sup>34</sup>I was unable to get comparative sales or distribution figures on different collections, but these would seem to depend more on other elements, such as price, language level, and illustrations, than on the particular selections of tales. Since most copies of “Twenty-four Exemplars,” “Thirty-six Exemplars,” and so on seem to be bought by parents for children, it is not clear how much the buyers are screening the actual content of different editions.

<sup>35</sup>There is a provocative but unfortunately only slight correlation in the ROC corpus between older protagonists and social miracles, as against younger protagonists and natural miracles. The cases are few, however, and the same correlation does not hold when the other two groups of tales are included. This type of correlation may or may not hold over Chinese popular miracle tales in general.

demythologizing reinterpretation of filial piety that is exhibited in the derivative tale collections.

#### D. The Age of Gold

In almost all the Yuán stories, the exemplars, be they kings or commoners, are figures from the more or less remote past. Idealizing the past is a traditional tendency in China, so this is not particularly surprising. The modern collections also make use of past figures, and this is especially congruent with public values in Taiwan because of the self-conscious public goal of sustaining strong emotional ties with the greater Chinese heritage despite political isolation from the mainland. At the same time the temptation to include Chiang Kai-shek (Jiǎng Jièshí 蔣介石), Koxinga (Zhèng Chénggōng 鄭成功), or one's friends is difficult to resist in contemporary Taiwan, and the quest for historicity may be more important than the passage of dynasties in selecting exemplary figures. Unfortunately, in a population that tends to idealize the past, the selection of more modern exemplars, while adding a kind of human credibility to the concept of filial piety, risks corroding the patina of age that seems to have been so prominent in the older stories. Here are the figures on the ways in which the three corpora utilize the past:

<u>Period</u>	<u>Yuán</u>	<u>Qīng</u>	<u>ROC</u>
Xià 夏 to Nánbě 南北 (pre-581)	21 (88%)	3 (13%)	29 (32%)
Suí 隋 to Nán sòng 南宋 (581-1276)	3 (13%)	9 (38%)	18 (21%)
Yuán 元 to Qīng 清 (1277-1911)	0 (00%)	12 (50%)	33 (36%)
ROC (1911-present)	0 (00%)	0 (00%)	4 (04%)
unknown	0 (00%)	0 (00%)	7 (08%)
Total	24 (101%)	24 (101%)	91 (101%)

We see that the Yuán tales make heavy use of the ancient days when giants walked the earth. The Qīng collection makes considerably greater use of heroines of its own dynasty and the one immediately preceding. And the ROC collection makes yet heavier use of figures in the comparatively recent past (the last six centuries). (Only one ROC editor actually includes one of his own acquaintances. See Zhòngwén 1984: 322-323.) Although this is no doubt motivated by various editors' drive for greater historicity and more modern relevance in the examples, the association of filial behavior with the idealized golden ages of remote antiquity is lost. If Lǐ Yìyuán is right, this helps to make filial piety seem like an attainable goal. On the other hand, it may also make it seem a less romantic one.

#### E. How Old Is a Filial Child?

Figures on the approximate age of the filial protagonists are also of interest as exhibiting provocative variation among our corpora. The intended consumers of the "Twenty-four Exemplars" were traditionally early readers, normally children, and the use of phonetic side-scripting in modern editions suggests that that is still the case, perhaps even more than in the past. At the same time, however, the modern editions tend to

include a much larger proportion of middle-aged filial children than the Yuán stories did. Here are the figures:<sup>36</sup>

Protagonist's Age	Yuán	Qīng	ROC
Child	9 (38%)	3 (13%)	9 (10%)
Youth	5 (21%)	10 (42%)	29 (32%)
Adult	7 (29%)	11 (46%)	50 (54%)
Elderly Person	3 (13%)	0 (00%)	3 (03%)
Total	24 (100%)	24 (100%)	91 (100%)

Miracle tales *tend* to involve children rather than adults as protagonists, but it seems improbable that demythologizing provides the reason for the greater number of older people in ROC stories.<sup>37</sup> More probably the quest for documentation and the use of real historical figures has resulted in cases that are known today because their adult friends were struck by their filiality and wrote about it, while the filiality of children one knows has at most times not struck writers as appropriate subject matter for serious writing. (This is the more true given that parents feel virtuous children should not be praised in their hearing lest it make them proud.) The selection of older models may arguably alienate the stories from their child readers, but it probably does not represent a change in the conceptualization of filial piety.

## F. Physical Injury

Among the features that strike western readers of Chinese morality tales are the instances of personal injury. I found these difficult to code. For one thing, risk does not always result in injury, even though it indicates an indifference to injury where filiality is involved. For another thing, many tales turn upon the filial child sacrificing his children or his social position on behalf of his parents. (One Yuán hero proposes to bury his child in order to afford to feed his mother; another, like several ROC imitators, gives up an official post to tend an ailing mother.) It seems arguable that the sacrifice involved in such an act is at least as great as the sacrifice of letting mosquitoes feast on one's childish body without brushing them away lest they bite a parent. In general, physical injury rates are lower than might be expected in a corpus of tales of filial sacrifice (Yuán 17%, Qīng 33%, ROC 10%), but the small variation between the Yuán and ROC corpora is almost certainly not significant. On the contrary, there seems to be continuity on this criterion.<sup>38</sup> The number of different filial acts represented in the tale collections is, of course enormous. However, the stability of the rate of physical injury confirms my intuitive sense that the general repertoire of filial acts, despite the greater number and detail of the

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<sup>36</sup>-It is often difficult to ascertain the age of a filial child at the time of the story, since it is only sometimes explicitly stated. I coded as children those individuals who seemed to be fully dependent on parents, as youths those who seemed capable of adult activities but who were apparently not yet married. I coded married people as adults rather than elderly people if they were not explicitly described as elderly.

<sup>37</sup>-Both in the ROC tales ( $p < 0.05$ ) and in the whole data set ( $p < 0.02$ ) there is a small correlation between the age (child-youth as against adult-elder) and whether or not a miracle occurs in the tale.

<sup>38</sup>-The Qīng stories show more cases of personal injury, but unlike the ROC collection, these are the product of a single editor whose inventiveness in selecting only female protagonists suggests the work's idiosyncrasy. There are no statistically significant correlations between physical injury and any other coded features of the stories for any of the corpora or for the totality of tales.



ROC stories, is relatively stable. In other words, one goes about being filial the same way one always went about being filial: by uncomplaining obedience and solicitude regardless of personal cost. If the editors of the modern collections seem to see the wellsprings of filial piety slightly differently from their predecessors, they nevertheless see the result through much the same eyes.

### G. Conclusions (Part 3)

The contemporary Filial Exemplar collections (ROC) are clearly in the same mold as the original (Yuán). However a potentially important transformation is detectable in them. Guō Jūjīng's original "Twenty-four Exemplars" presented filial piety as a cosmic principle, one associated with golden ages of the past and one that so resonated through the universe as to produce miracles. Much of the same interpretation is found in our one Qīng dynasty collection. Modern collections, in contrast, seek better historicity for filial exemplars, more recent individuals, and a wider variety of kinship relations, and they tend to exclude tales that depend upon either natural or social miracles. These goals are congruent with the general skeptical modern intellectual tradition in China over the last century and a half. All of these changes perhaps do make the exemplars both more acceptable as objects of modern, skeptical contemplation and more "credible" as models for imitation. But they tend to present filial actions as conventions only of a Chinese tradition rather than as actions in accordance with a universal cosmic system applicable to all people everywhere. Some evidence suggests that this change in conception is not shared by all elements of Taiwan society, but may be limited to an educated elite, such as the editors of these books. There is also limited evidence to suggest that the new books of stories tend to present filial piety as an emotion felt toward parents and parent surrogates because of their earlier nurturance rather than as a duty owed to a limited number of individuals occupying the clearly defined status of parent. Both conceptions are inherent in all of the stories, but the stress may have shifted slightly. If so, this shift too would tend to de-emphasize universality of filiality in favor of more parochial personal experience.

## Appendix I: The Twenty-Four Filial Exemplars

(The original version of this article included a full translation of the Yuán document as an appendix. That appendix is omitted here, since a slightly revised version including the Chinese text is available on my web site at:

<http://anthro.ucsd.edu/~dkjordan/scriptorium/xiao/xiaointro.html>

One footnote on the tale of Dīng Lán (#23) is somewhat abbreviated there.<sup>39</sup> Because of the omission of the translation from this document, remaining footnotes here do not correspond to the numbering in the printed version.)

## Appendix II: Data Table of Filial Exemplars and Codes

Name	Sex	Object of Era* Piety	Injury Miracle†	Age§	Sources¶
Bān Gù 班固	m	1 F	n n	a	bcdghmr
Bāo Shífu 包實夫	m	3 FM	y n	y	dr
Bào Chū 鮑出	m	1 M	n n	e	ijr
Cài Jǐng 蔡景	m	? M	n n	a	dr
Cài Shùn 蔡順	m	1 M	s n	c	abcdghm
Cài Xiāng 蔡襄	m	2 M	n n	a	jr
Cài Yōng 蔡邕	m	1 M	n n	a	cdhmr
Cáo É 曹娥	f	1 F	y y	y	dfkr
Chén Dōngmíng 陳冬明	m	4 Gm	n n	a	dr
Chén Kǎn 陳侃	m	2 M	n n	a	ijr
Chén shì 陳氏	f	1 Hm	s n	a	f
Chén shì Wáng qī 陳氏王妻	f	3 Hm	y y	a	f
Chén Shūdá 陳叔達	m	2 M	n n	a	ijr
Chén Sīdào 陳思道	m	2 M	n n	a	ir
Chén Yí 陳遺	m	1 M	y n	y	bcdhijmr
Chén Yùyán 陳玉言	m	? FM	n n	a	dr
Chén Zhīshǎo 陳之少	f	1 Hm	n n	a	kr
Chéng Ruìlián 程瑞蓮	f	3 M	y n	a	f
Cuī Miǎn 崔沔	m	2 M	n n	a	dkr
Cuī shì 崔氏	f	2 M	y y	y	f
Chúnyú Tíyíng 淳于緹縈	f	1 F	s n	y	dfijr
Dài Mǎn 戴曼	m	? F	n n	y	dr

<sup>39</sup>This is the one story which some modern editors rewrite, apparently in order to avoid the divorce. In a couple of retellings in my collection (Lín Shùlíng et al. 1984:145 [source g] and Zhòngwén 1984: 126-130), the wife sees the statues react, is grief-stricken, reforms, and is forgiven rather than divorced by her husband. In one elaborately illustrated, heavy-paper edition designed for younger children, (Zhān Yījīn 1975: vol 8, pp. 10-15), a neighbor's wife, come to borrow something, scoffs at Dīng Lán's wife at her devotions before the statues. Dīng Lán's wife, angered, refuses to lend her what she wants. The neighbor's wife returns home and sends her husband over, who sneers and beats the statues with his stick. Dīng Lán returns, sees the weeping statues, hears the tale, and stabs the neighbor to death. The magistrate, rather than punishing him, commends him as a fine example of filial piety.

Dí Rénjié 狄仁傑	m	2	FM	n	n	a	cdghijmr
Dīng Chúnliáng 丁純良	m	3	F	y	n	a	bcdhjmr
Dīng Lán 丁蘭	m	1	FM	y	n	a	abdg
Dǒng Yǒng 董永	m	1	F	y	n	y	abdg
Dù Xiào 杜孝	m	2	M	y	n	a	ir
Fàn Xuān 范宣	m	1	FM	n	n	c	bcdhijmr
Fáng Jǐngbó 房景伯	m	?	M	n	n	a	dr
Fū Chāi 夫差	m	1	F	n	n	a	hr
Gāo Bìdá 高必達	m	3	F	n	n	a	kr
Gé Miàozhēn 葛妙真	f	3	M	y	n	c	fir
Gù Tì 顧悌	m	1	F	n	n	a	ijr
Gù Yánwǔ 顧炎武	m	3	Sm	n	n	a	bcdghmr
Guī Yuè 歸鉞	m	3	FSm	n	n	y	jr
Guō Dàoqīng 郭道卿							
& Guō Zuǒqīng 郭佐卿	m	3	Ffff B	s	n	a	kr
Guō Jù 郭巨	m	1	M	y	n	a	adg
Guō Yuánpíng 郭原平	m	2	FM	n	n	y	ir
Hán Bóyú 韓伯俞	m	1	M	n	y	c	dkr
Hàn Wén dì 漢文帝 (r)	m	1	M	n	n	a	abdg
Hàn Wǔ dì 漢武帝 (r)	m	1	Wetnurse	n	n	a	ijr
Hóng Xiáng 洪祥	m	3	F	y	n	y	dr
Huà Mùlán 華木蘭	f	2	F	n	n	y	dfir
Huáng Dàoxián 黃道賢	m	3	FMF's 1stW	n	n	a	kr
Huáng Tíngjiān 黃庭堅	m	2	M	n	n	a	abcdghm
Huáng Xiāng 黃香	m	1	F	s	n	c	abcdghm
Jiāng Gé 江革	m	1	M	s	n	y	abcdghm
Jiāng Liángxù 江良緒	m	3	FM	n	n	a	kr
Jiāng Shī 姜詩	m	1	M	y	n	a	abdg
Jiǎng Zhōngzhèng 蔣中正	m	4	M	n	n	a	dghr
Kǒng Qiū 孔邱	m	1	M	n	n	y	cdgmr
Lái shì 萊氏	m	1	FM	n	n	e	abcdghm
Lǐ Mì 李密	m	1	Gm	n	n	a	cdghkmr
Lǐ shì Xiè qī 李氏謝妻	f	3	Hf	s	n	a	ir
Lǐ Yīnglín 李應麟	m	3	FSm	n	n	y	kr
Liáng Wǔ dì 梁武帝 (r)	m	1	FM	n	n	a	kr
Liú Jǐn 劉謹	m	3	F	n	n	y	kr
Liú Lánjiě 劉蘭姐	f	3	Hm Hfm	y	y	y	fijr
Liú shì 劉氏	f	3	M	y	n	y	f
Lú shì Zhèng qī 盧氏鄭妻	f	2	Hm	n	n	a	f
Lù Jì 陸績	m	1	M	s	n	c	adg
Lù shì 陸氏	f	3	F	y	n	y	f
Máo Róng 茅容	m	1	M	n	n	a	ijr
Mèng Zōng 孟宗	m	1	M	y	n	c	abdg
Mǐn Sǔn 閔損	m	1	FSm	s	y	c	abcdghm
Mǐn Zhēn 閔真	m	3	FM	n	n	a	cdmr
Niè Ruiyún 聶瑞雲	f	2	M	n	n	c	f
Pān Yuè 潘岳	m	1	M	n	n	a	jr
Pān Zōng 潘綜	m	1	F	n	y	y	cdhkmr
Qiáo Yīng 譙瑛	m	1	F	y	n	y	bcdhmr
Shēn Jīzhōng 深積中	m	2	FM Sm Sf	n	n	a	cdghmr

Shēn Míng 申鳴	m	1	F	n	y	a	kr
Shěn Bādi 沈巴弟	m	3	M	s	n	c	ir
Shěn Yúnyīng 沈雲英	f	3	F	n	n	y	bcdghijmr
Shùn dì 舜蒂 (r)	m	1	FM	ys	n	y	abcdghm
Sì Shàokāng 姒少康	m	1	M	n	n	y	bcdghmr
Sòng Rénzōng dì 宋仁宗帝 (r)	m	2	M	n	n	a	kr
Sūn shì Wú qī 孫氏吳妻	f	3	Hm	n	n	a	f
Sūn Yì 孫抑	m	3	FM	s	n	y	ijr
Tán shì 鄒氏	m	1	FM	n	n	c	abdg
Tán Zàn 譚贊	m	4	M	n	n	e	dr
Táng fūrén 唐夫人	f	2	Hm	n	n	a	abdg
Táo Kǎn 陶侃	m	1	FM	n	n	a	bcdhmr
Wáng Lánzhēn 王蘭真	f	3	F	n	n	y	f
Wáng Póu 王裒	m	1	M	n	n	a	abdg
Wáng Rùn 王閏	m	3	F	n	y	y	cdhmr
Wáng shì Chén qī 王氏陳妻	f	2	Hf Hm	n	n	a	cdhmr
Wáng shì Xià qī 王氏夏妻	f	3	Hf Hm	n	n	a	f
Wáng shì Zhào qī 王氏趙妻	f	3	Hm	y	y	a	f
Wáng Sīcōng 王思聰	m	3	FSm	n	y	a	kr
Wáng Xiáng 王祥	m	1	Sm	y	y	c	abdg
Wáng Yuán 王原	m	3	F	y	n	a	dr
Wáng Zhōng 王忠	m	?	M	n	n	a	dr
Wén Zhōng 文忠 & Wén Xiào 文孝	m	3	FM	y	n	y	ijr
Wú Měng 吳猛 g	m	1	FM	n	y	c	abdg
Wú sì xiōngdì 吳四兄弟	m	3	FM	n	n	a	dijr
Wú Yīkuí 吳一魁	m	3	F	s	n	c	kr
Xiāo Míngcàn 蕭明燦	m	3	M	n	n	y	hr
Xiè Dìngzhù 謝定住	m	3	M	n	n	c	cdmr
Xiè Xiǎo'é 謝小娥	f	2	F	n	n	y	f
Xuē Wén 薛文							
& Xuē Huàlǐ 薛化禮	m	3	M	n	n	y	cdhkmr
Xún Guàn 荀灌	f	1	F	n	n	y	cdhmr
yǎ xiàozi 啞孝子	m	?	M	n	n	y	dr
Yán Yīngyòu 顏應祐	m	3	M	n	n	a	cdhmr
Yáng qǐrén 楊乞人	m	2	FM	n	n	a	jr
Yáng Xiāng 楊香	m	1	F	n	n	c	abdg
Yáng Xiùzhēn 楊秀真	f	2	M	y	n	c	f
Yélù Xīliàng 耶律希亮	m	3	M Gf	n	n	a	cdmr
Yǐng Kǎoshū 穎考叔	m	1	M	s	n	a	bcdghkmr
Yóu Xīnjí 尤新吉	m	4	M	n	n	a	dr
Yù Qiánlóu 庾黔婁	m	1	F	y	y	e	abdg
Yuè Fēi 岳飛	m	2	M	n	y	a	bcdghmr
Yuè Kē 岳珂	m	2	F Gf	n	n	c	cdhmr
Zēng Shēn 曾參 (Fa)	m	1	F	n	n	y	cdhmr
Zēng Shēn 曾參 (Mo)	m	1	M	y	n	y	abdg
Zhān Shì 詹氏	f	2	F Eb	n	y	y	f
Zhāng Dàguān 張大觀	m	?	M	n	y	y	dr
Zhāng Fū 張敷	m	1	M	n	n	y	ijr
Zhāng Júhuā 張菊花	f	2	FSm	n	n	c	ijr
Zhāng qǐrén 張乞人	m	3	M	s	n	e	kr

Zhāng shì Gù qī 張氏顧妻	f	2	Hm	y	n	a	f
Zhāng Sùzhēn 張素真	f	3	M	y	n	a	f
Zhāng Zōnglǔ 張宗魯	m	3	M	s	n	a	kr
Zhāng-Lǐ shì 張李氏	f	2	Hm	n	y	a	f
Zhào Zhì 趙至	m	1	F	n	n	c	kr
Zhào Zǐ 趙咨	m	1	M	n	n	a	kr
Zhào Zōngtì 趙宗悌	m	2	FM	n	n	y	kr
Zhèng Chénggōng 鄭成功	m	3	F	n	n	a	bcdghmr
Zhòng Yóu 仲由	m	1	FM	n	n	y	abcdghm
Zhōu shì Wáng qī 周氏王妻	f	3	Hm	n	y	a	f
Zhōu shì Zhōu qī 周氏周妻	f	3	Hm	n	n	a	jr
Zhōu Wén wáng 周文王 (r)	m	1	FM	n	n	a	ijr
Zhū Shòuchāng 朱壽昌	m	2	M	n	n	e	abdg
Zhū Tài 朱泰	m	2	M	y	n	y	dr

\*-Codings for era are: 1 = pre-Suí, 2 = Suí through Sòng, 3 = Yuán through Qīng, 4 = ROC

†-Codings for miracles are: n = no miracle, y = natural miracle, involving unexpected behavior from a non-human in response to a filial act, s = social miracle, involving improbable behavior from a human being in response to a filial act

§-Codings for age are: c = child, y = youth (unmarried), a = adult, e = elderly person

¶-Codings of sources are as follows:

a = Huítú èrshí sì xiào. 繪圖二十四孝。 (Yuán corpus) Huítú 1967 *et alibi*

b = Sānshí liù xiào. 三十六孝。 Huà Yōng 1984

c = Sānshí liù xiào. 三十六孝。 Wú Yánhuán 1979 *et alibi*

d = Qīshí èr xiào de gùshi. 七十二孝的故事。 Zhòngwén 1984

f = Nǚzǐ èrshí sì xiào túshuō. 女子二十四孝圖說。 (Qīng corpus) Wáng Jīnshēng n.d.

g = Zuìxīn sānshí liù xiào de gùshi. 最新三十六孝的故事。 Lín Shùlíng et al. 1984

h = Sānshí liù xiào de gùshi. 三十六孝的故事。 Lín Shùlíng et al. 1984

i = Xīn biān èrshí sì xiào de gùshi. 新編二十四孝的故事。 Xīnbiān 1984

j = Xīnzuàn sānshí liù xiào de gùshi. 新撰三十六孝的故事。 Lín Shùlíng et al. 1984 *et alibi*

k = Xùzuàn sānshí liù xiào de gùshi. 續撰三十六孝的故事。 Lín Shùlíng et al. 1984 *et alibi*

m = Sānshí liù xiào. 三十六孝。 Chén Zhàoqí 1983

r = redundant code identifying ROC corpus as used in this essay.

Note also that kintypes in the above list use only one upper-case letter each, hence, for example, FM means “father and mother.” Sm stands for “stepmother.”

## Appendix III: Alternative Names of Filial Exemplars

Some filial exemplars are better known under alternative names (usually zì 字 or hào 號). The most common of these are listed here with cross-references back to the names used in the table above. As above, titles that are not actually names are not capitalized. Note: zǐ 子 is often an honorific; dì 帝 = emperor; fūrén 夫人 = “Madame”; shì 氏 = surname; qī 妻 = wife. The formula Wáng shì Chén qī 王氏陳妻 means “Originally surnamed Wáng, married into Chén family.” Some female exemplars have no other known names, and in some cases only their married surnames are known: Táng fūrén 唐夫人 = “Madame Táng.”

Alternative Name

Bān Zhāo 班昭 \*  
 Bào Wénfāng 鮑文芳  
 Cài Bójiē 蔡伯喈  
 Cài Duān 蔡端  
 Cài Jūnzhòng 蔡君仲  
 Chén Jūnhé 陳君和  
 Chén Tángqián 陳堂前  
 Chén Xiàofū 陳孝夫  
 Dīng Kèjiā 丁克家  
 Fàn Zǐxuān 范子宣  
 Gù Jiàng 顧絳  
 Gù Níng rén 顧寧仁  
 Gù Tínglín 顧亭林  
 Gù Zǐtōng 顧子通  
 Huā Mùlán 花木蘭  
 Huáng Fú wēng 黃涪翁  
 Huáng Lǔzhí 黃魯直  
 Huáng Shāngǔ 黃山谷  
 Huáng Tāng wēng 黃湯翁  
 Huáng Wénjiàng 黃文強  
 Jiāng Cì wēng 江次翁  
 Jiǎng Jièshí 蔣介石  
 Jiāng Jùxiào 江巨孝  
 Kǒng Zhòngní 孔仲尼  
 Kǒngzǐ 孔子  
 lǎo Lái zǐ 老萊子  
 Lǐ Lìngbó 李令伯  
 Liú Héng 劉恒  
 Lù Gōngjì 陸公紀  
 Máo Jìwěi 茅季偉  
 Mèng Gōngwǔ 孟恭武  
 Mǐn Zhèngzhāi 閔正齋  
 Mǐn Zǐqiān 閔子騫  
 Pān Ānrén 潘安仁  
 Shàokāng 少康  
 Tán zǐ 郟子  
 Táo Shìxíng 陶士行  
 Wáng Wěiyuán 王偉元  
 Wáng Xiūzhēng 王休徵  
 Xiāo Shūdá 蕭叔達  
 Xiāo Yǎn 蕭衍  
 Xiè Wànchéng zhī qī 謝萬程之妻  
 yǎ 啞 yea (= “deaf”; surname unknown)  
 Yán Xiàoxiān 顏孝先  
 Yáo Chónguá 姚重華  
 Yélù Míngfǔ 耶律明甫  
 Yélù Sùxuān 耶律愨軒  
 Yuè Péngjǔ 岳鵬舉  
 Yuè Sùzhī 岳肅之

Name Used Here

sister of Bān Gù 班固 \*  
 Bào Chū 鮑出  
 Cài Yōng 蔡邕  
 Cài Xiāng 蔡襄  
 Cài Shùn 蔡順  
 Chén Kǎn 陳侃  
 Wáng shì Chén qī 王氏陳妻  
 Chén shì 陳氏  
 Dīng Chúnliáng 丁純良  
 Fàn Xuān 范宣  
 Gù Yánwǔ 顧炎武  
 Gù Yánwǔ 顧炎武  
 Gù Yánwǔ 顧炎武  
 Gù Tì 顧悌  
 Huà Mùlán 華木蘭  
 Huáng Tíngjiān 黃庭堅  
 Huáng Tíngjiān 黃庭堅  
 Huáng Tíngjiān 黃庭堅  
 Huáng Tíngjiān 黃庭堅  
 Huáng Xiāng 黃香  
 Jiāng Gé 江革  
 Jiǎng Zhōngzhèng 蔣中正  
 Jiāng Gé 江革  
 Kǒng Qiū 孔邱  
 Kǒng Qiū 孔邱  
 Lái shì 萊氏  
 Lǐ Mì 李密  
 Hàn Wén dì 漢文帝 (r)  
 Lù Jì 陸績  
 Máo Róng 茅容  
 Mèng Zōng 孟宗  
 Mǐn Zhēn 閔真  
 Mǐn Sùn 閔損  
 Pān Yuè 潘岳  
 Sī Shàokāng 姒少康  
 Tán shì 郟氏  
 Táo Kǎn 陶侃  
 Wáng Póu 王裒  
 Wáng Xiáng 王祥  
 Liáng Wǔ dì 梁武帝 (r)  
 Liáng Wǔ dì 梁武帝 (r)  
 Lǐ shì Xiè qī 李氏謝妻  
 yǎ xiào zǐ 啞孝子  
 Yán Yīngyòu 顏應祐  
 Shùn dì 舜蒂 (r)  
 Yélù Xīliàng 耶律希亮  
 Yélù Xīliàng  
 Yuè Fēi 岳飛  
 Yuè Kē 岳珂

Zēng zǐ 曾子	Zēng Shēn
Zēng Zǐyú 曾子輿	Zēng Shēn
Zhào Héng 趙恆	Sòng Rénzōng dì 宋仁宗帝 (r)
Zhào Jǐngzhēn 趙景真	Zhào Zhì 趙至
Zhào Wénchǔ 趙文楚	Zhào Zǐ 趙咨
Zhòng Jìlù 仲季路	Zhòng Yóu 仲由
Zhòng Zǐlù 仲子路	Zhòng Yóu 仲由
Zhōu shìjūn zhī qī 周氏君之妻	Zhōu shì Zhōu qī 周氏周妻

\*-Although Bān Zhāo 班昭 is mentioned in other contexts as a filial exemplar, she does not figure as the protagonist of any of the stories in this corpus, but only as a subordinate character.

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